

THE GROWTH OF SOVIET SEA POWER, 1960-1971  
AND ITS IMPACT UPON UNITED STATES  
FOREIGN POLICY

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THE GROWTH OF SOVIET SEA POWER, 1960-1971  
AND ITS IMPACT UPON UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY

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CHAPTER I  
THE RISE OF THE SOVIET  
NAVY

In 1960 the Soviet Navy was the second largest in the world in terms of total tonnage, but in terms of equipment and striking power and in terms of its ability to conduct sustained operations away from home waters it was far behind the smaller British and French navies, not to mention the American. In terms of ship types the Soviet Navy consisted of some 19 cruisers, most of 1948 vintage, 133 destroyer types (including four with 60-100 mile range anti-ship missiles), and about 196 submarines with sufficient range to operate on the high seas. Of the latter none were nuclear powered, and it is estimated that perhaps six of them carried surface-to-surface missiles in the 350-mile range class. The Navy possessed a limited capacity for short-haul amphibious operations, with approximately 64 newly constructed landing ships, all but ten of which were under 1000 tons displacement. The Naval Air Force, land based, was being drastically reduced in size, the decision having been made to transfer all of its fighter aircraft to the Army Air Force and the Home Defense Air Force.<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Naval Infantry had been disbanded after World War II.

It is of course difficult to discover the extent of interservice rivalry within the Soviet military establishment. There is no public equivalent of the Congressional military appropriations hearings or Department of Defense re-organization plans which often reveal the relative prestige rankings of the U.S. armed services. Indicators of the Soviet military "pecking order" are less direct, but nonetheless are available. Some of the less esoteric of such signs of prestige or the lack of it are the historical record, the

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<sup>1</sup>Siegfried Breyer, Guide to the Soviet Navy (Annapolis, 1969).



organization of the Soviet defense establishment, and the statements of government and party leaders.

The record of history does not add to the prestige of the Soviet Navy. As a result of the Kronstadt Revolt against the Bolsheviks in 1921 the Navy labored for many years under that most damning of all stigmata in Soviet Russia, political unreliability. It had to live with the ghost of its humiliating defeat by Japan in 1905. Its contribution to the Great Patriotic War (World War II), while not insignificant, was very definitely made as a member of the "Army team," making amphibious landings to outflank the Germans and fighting up and down the great rivers of Russia and Eastern Europe.

In 1953 the Ministry for the Armed Forces, which had been subdivided into a War Ministry and a Navy Ministry, was abolished. In its place was formed the Ministry of Defense under which the service branches were organized according to their combat role: Strategic Rocket Troops, National PVO (Air Defense), Ground Forces, Air Forces, and Naval Forces. Since its inception, the post of Minister of Defense has always been filled by an Army officer, as have the posts of First Deputy Minister of Defense and First Deputy Minister of Defense and Chief of Staff.

Stalin reportedly had become a "big Navy" advocate by 1950, when he approved a naval construction plan which would provide for a large surface fleet, thought to include four aircraft carriers.<sup>2</sup> The man who emerged from the power struggle of 1953-1955 as ruler of the Soviet Union did not share his predecessor's enthusiasm for a surface Navy. Nikita Khrushchev, reversing a position he had held only a few years previously, announced that the

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<sup>2</sup>Robert Waring Herrick, Soviet Naval Strategy, (Annapolis, 1968), pp. 63-64.



might of the Soviet Union was such that resources could be diverted from military spending into other areas of the economy. Building on the capital of Sputnik, Khrushchev boasted of the might of the Strategic Rocket Troops, while carrying out reductions in the personnel of the Armed Forces and holding the military budget approximately constant from 1956-1961. He was interested in the strategic nuclear strike potential of submarine-launched missiles, but publicly relegated large surface vessels to the status of cruise ships for heads of state in peacetime and "molten coffins" in war.

A speech by the Minister of Defense commemorating the anniversary of the founding of the Soviet Armed Forces is an annual ritual in the Soviet Union. In 1960 the incumbent, Marshal R. Ya. Malinovsky, began with the phrase "For 42 years the Soviet Army and Navy have stood vigilant guard over the peace of the peoples . . ."<sup>3</sup> and went on for 2600 words without mentioning the Navy again. In concluding a passage warning "imperialist aggressors" of their fate should they dare to attack, he said "The Soviet Army's mighty nuclear rocket equipment enables us to guarantee more securely than ever the defense of the land of the Soviets and other socialist countries."<sup>4</sup>

Red Army Day and Soviet Navy Day are similar occasions for singing the praises of the respective services. On Soviet Navy Day 1960 even the

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<sup>3</sup>"On Guard Over Peace," Pravda, February 23, 1960, p. 2. Except where otherwise noted Russian language citations are from the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies' Current Digest of the Soviet Press, a weekly journal of translations. Dates of publication and page numbers refer to the original Russian source.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., emphasis supplied.







Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy, Admiral Sergei G. Gorshkov, felt constrained to speak of his service in a distinctly secondary role.

"Rocket troops, which have the greatest firepower, now form the chief branch of our Armed Forces," said the Admiral, who then turned to naval matters by noting that present day military operations can be conducted only with the cooperation of all branches of the service.<sup>5</sup> "Large fighting ships and aircraft carriers . . . now represent the yesterday of navies," said Gorshkov, prudently following Khrushchev's lead "It is correctly believed in advanced military thought that the navy that best meets the requirements of modern warfare must be basically a submarine navy. It is in this direction that the Navy of the Soviet Union is now developing."<sup>6</sup>

There are indications that Admiral Gorshkov was not at this time in the first tier of senior Soviet military officials. As a Candidate Member of the Communist Party Central Committee he was in the outer group of high party officialdom; other service chiefs, including his predecessor, had been full members. Gorshkov reached his fiftieth birthday in 1960, and was awarded the Order of Lenin on that occasion. The brief official announcement of this event appears quite perfunctory and does not even mention his naval service, simply noting " . . . Order of Lenin to Comrade Sergei Georgiyevich Gorshkov on his fiftieth birthday for services to the Soviet State."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>"Loyal Sons of the Homeland," Pravda, July 31, 1960, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>"Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet," Pravda, February 26, 1960, p. 1.



The Navy was in a backwater operationally as well. As might be expected of a Navy whose value was determined by what assistance it could render to the Army, the Soviet Navy remained almost exclusively in the waters bordering the Soviet Union. Out-of-area operations were largely limited to those dictated by logistic necessity: annual transfers of units between the Northern and Baltic Fleets, and between the Northern and Pacific Fleets, via the isolated northern route skirting the Siberian coast. This activity, plus perhaps one or two "show the flag" visits annually to foreign ports in the Mediterranean and North Atlantic constituted Soviet open-ocean naval operations. These operations " . . . left the impression that the Soviets felt somewhat uncomfortable outside the waters of their own fleet areas."<sup>8</sup> Indicative of the stay-at-home nature of the Soviet Navy during this period is the fact that when the cruiser DZERZHINSKI logged 13,000 steaming miles during 1961 this was hailed as a considerable feat in Soviet circles.<sup>9</sup> In the same vein, an article in Izvestia reported somewhat wistfully 'the dream of all atomic submarine commanders--a voyage around the world underwater.'<sup>10</sup>

The first significant out-of-area Soviet naval exercise was conducted during the summer of 1961, when a brief, simple operation involving a small

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"Soviet Naval Activities, 1960-1970," NATO Letter, XVIII (September, 1970), p. 6.

<sup>9</sup> D. R. Cox, "Sea Power and Soviet Foreign Policy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, 95 (June, 1969), pp. 38-39. The U.S. Navy's tempo of operations is such that it is not unusual for its ships to travel in excess of 40,000 miles in the course of a 6 month cruise to the Western Pacific.

<sup>10</sup> V. Goltsev, "Atomic Submarine at Sea," Izvestia, October 8, 1961, p. 6.



number of surface combatants, support ships, and four submarines took place in the Norwegian Sea. In this same year there were several significant events in Soviet naval construction. Perhaps reflecting the announced increase of 30 per cent in the Soviet military budget, conversion of the gun cruiser DZERZHINSKI was begun, marking the first Soviet efforts to provide a seagoing anti-air missile capability. In April the first of the KYNDA class missile cruisers was launched. This was the first of the modern Soviet cruisers emphasizing missile armament. Early units of the later well-known STYX missile fast patrol boats--the OSA and the KOMAR class--joined the Soviet fleet, as did (according to Soviet sources--Western observers did not view one until 1963) the first Soviet nuclear powered submarine, the "N" class. In the summer the Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean was severely reduced when the squadron based at Saseno, Albania, was withdrawn as the result of strained Soviet-Albanian relations stemming from the latter's position in the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute. The end of 1961 saw an upsurge in the political standing of the Navy, as both Admiral Gorshkov and his First Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Vitalii Fokin, were elevated to full membership status in the Central Committee.

For the Soviet Navy, and, indeed, for most of the world, the most significant event of 1962 was the Cuban Missile Crisis. It demonstrated in striking fashion the Achilles heel of the military posture adopted by the Soviet Union under Khrushchev: lacking mobile conventional forces the Russians had no options between the rapid retreat which they chose and the strategic nuclear attack which they rationally avoided. The Soviet Navy, its deployed forces consisting entirely of submarines, was unable to act





in support of Soviet foreign policy. The submarine, because of the very invisibility which makes it such an effective "hot war" weapon, is a poor means by which to express firm national commitment in a "cold war" situation. Khrushchev was forced to threaten American missile bases in Turkey because he could not support his own in Cuba. The subsequent construction of modern surface vessels and their deployment to overseas areas of importance to the Soviets indicates their increased appreciation of the role which sea power may play in support of foreign policy.

The naval construction effort during 1962 saw construction begin on the lead ship of ten KASHIN class guided missile destroyers, the first major Soviet warships to incorporate the advantages (rapid acceleration, ease of maintenance, and increased operational readiness) of gas turbine propulsion. In contrast, the U.S. Navy will not have its first naval combatant of this nature in operation until 1974, when the first of the SPRUANCE class destroyers is scheduled for delivery. Of significance to the Soviet Navy's strategic posture, the last of thirty "G" class ballistic missile submarines was completed. This class, the first to be built specifically to deliver ballistic missiles, first appeared in 1960, and was then capable of carrying three 350-mile range SARK missiles, each mounting a one megaton nuclear warhead; it was at that time required to surface at least partially in order to launch the missiles but it is undoubtedly now fitted with later models which can be launched from complete submergence, and have longer range as well.

Operationally, the summer of 1962 saw the first Black Sea Fleet to Northern Fleet transfer take place. In July, four surface combatants, a number of support ships, and more than twenty submarines conducted an





exercise which included Naval Air Force participation in the area between Norway's North Cape and the Iceland-Faeroes Gap (the ocean area lying between Iceland and Norway's Faeroe Island group). Western evidence to support the claim is inconclusive, but the Soviets stated that a "N" class nuclear submarine conducted exercises under the northern icepack, including a North Pole transit, during this period.<sup>11</sup>

Evidence began to appear in 1962 that concepts of the Navy's mission were changing within the Soviet military establishment. Breaking an extended silence in Soviet military writing of a serious nature, Marshal of the Soviet Union V. D. Sokolovsky and an unnamed group of senior Soviet officers published the book Military Strategy. This volume was unflattering to the Soviet Navy in a number of ways, not the least of which being the fact that no naval officers were asked to contribute to this, a study of the entire spectrum of modern warfare. However, the book reveals that even among Army officers it was conceded that support of the Red Army was no longer the primary mission of the Soviet Navy. The Sokolovsky group indicated that the primary mission of the Navy in general war was to seek out and destroy Western attack carrier striking groups and Polaris submarines " . . . far beyond the confines of Soviet waters."<sup>12</sup> In carrying out this mission of the Navy would rely heavily on "nuclear rockets" and especially submarines. It was also indicated that destruction of enemy logistic shipping would be an important task of the Navy, and, although not specifically discussed, it was strongly implied that there would be need of a major sealift capability, since in the authors' view of nuclear war actual invasion of the enemy's territory would be necessary to assure victory. There was no mention of how the Navy might be used in conflict situations below the level of general war.

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<sup>11</sup>Breyer, op. cit., pp. 157, 286.

<sup>12</sup>Military Strategy (New York, 1963) p. 194



A new tone appeared in the Armed Forces anniversary speech as well:

Our country's submarine fleet is equipped with various types of missiles that can destroy enemy ships hundreds of kilometers distant from the shores of the socialist camp and that can reduce the enemy's naval and land bases to dust. Nor will submarines equipped with Polaris missiles . . . be spared destruction.

The Soviet Army and Navy are now equipped with quantities of missiles and nuclear weapons . . . sufficient to wipe out any aggressor . . .<sup>13</sup>

Late in the same year, a statement by Admiral Gorshkov first made reference to another facet of the Navy's mission, one which would seem to imply a recognition of the foreign policy aspects of naval strategy: "The Soviet Navy, by the character of her armament of highly manueverable forces and military capabilities, is obliged to be prepared at any moment and at any point of the globe to secure the protection of the interests of our state."<sup>14</sup> The phrase 'protection of state interests' has appeared on several occasions since 1962, both in Gorshkov's writings and in Navy Day newspaper editorials, and appears from its context on subsequent occasions to be a concept distinct from defense of the Soviet state as such. In 1963, for example, Gorshkov wrote:

The Communist Party and the Soviet government are displaying wise foresight, taking all measures to insure that the armament and organization of our fleet correspond to its growing role in the defense of the country, and in the protection of its state interests.<sup>15</sup>

That this concept was considered to be applicable in peacetime was later indicated, as Gorshkov stated in 1967 that the role of the Navy included support of "state interests at sea in peacetime."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>R. Ya. Malinovsky, "On Guard Over the Peaceful Labor of the Builders of Communism," Pravda, February 23, 1962, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup>Cox, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>15</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>16</sup>Secretary of the Navy Paul R. Ignatius, "The Soviet Navy," speech delivered before the Retired Flag and General Officer Symposium, Washington D.C., March 29, 1968. Vital Speeches, XXIV (June 1, 1968), 482-484.



In 1962 Admiral Gorshkov assumed the rank of Fleet Admiral, although this was apparently not a promotion but an administrative measure " . . . for the purpose of bringing the military ranks of the USSR Navy into full correspondence with the military ranks of the Soviet Army . . ." <sup>17</sup> He was also designated a Deputy Minister of Defense, as were the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Rocket Troops, the PVO and the Air Force.

In 1963 the first of what has since become a pattern of bi-annual Soviet fleet exercises was conducted. In March and April a surface exercise was conducted near Norway's Lofoten Islands, and in August a similar exercise took place in the Iceland-Faeroes Gap, the area which Soviet submarines of the Northern Fleet would be likely to transit in wartime to reach the Atlantic shipping lanes. Politically, there were further indications that the Soviet Navy's position within the military hierarchy was still improving: After Admiral Fokin died, Gorshkov's signature to the official obituary appeared directly following the signatures of the First Deputy Secretaries of Defense, and above that of any other Service chief. That this was not merely in deference to the fact that the deceased was a close comrade is indicated by the fact that when Marshal Malinovsky, Minister of Defense, died in 1967, Admiral Gorshkov's signature again appeared in the same relative position ahead of the other service leaders. <sup>18</sup> Admiral Fokin's duties were assumed by Admiral V. A. Kasatonov.

Three significant events in the growth of the Soviet submarine force occurred in 1963. Soviet builders completed both the first Soviet

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<sup>17</sup> Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, "On Establishing the Military Rank of 'Fleet Admiral'," Pravda, April 29, 1962, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Cox, op. cit., p. 39.





submarine designed from the outset to have anti-ship missiles as its primary weapon, and the first of their nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines. The former, lead ship of the "J" class, is the latest known type of conventionally powered Soviet submarine, and carries four SHADDOCK radio-guided missiles. These missiles have a 450 mile range and may be fitted with either a high explosive or a nuclear warhead. The ballistic missile submarine, first of the "H" class, was a follow-on version of the conventionally-powered "G" class, and was armed with the same missiles. An indication of the rapid pace of Soviet submarine development is given by the fact that the first of the "E" class submarines, successors to the "J" class and in fact laid down a year later than the "J" prototype, was also completed in 1963. This class, which combines the advantages of nuclear propulsion with an increased SHADDOCK missile carrying capacity, would appear to be the type which the Soviets are relying on to destroy the Western attack carrier striking groups. As of early 1970 a total of 25 of this class had been built.

Western discussions of the possibility of a NATO Multilateral Nuclear Force in 1963 touched a sensitive Soviet nerve: the question of West German access to nuclear weapons. Although the proposal, which would have placed at sea a fleet of nuclear rocket-launching surface vessels manned by multinational NATO crews but with control of the nuclear warheads retained by the U.S., never gained full acceptance within the American government and encountered wide skepticism among most of the other NATO nations, the Soviets attacked it loudly. This renewed emphasis on the NATO naval threat could not have hurt the Soviet Navy's expansion program. This point was not lost on Admiral Gorshkov, who volunteered the readiness of





the Soviet Navy to bring these "pirate ships" to justice.<sup>19</sup>

In 1964 the Soviet Naval Infantry (marine corps) was resurrected in what was for the Soviets a blast of publicity.<sup>20</sup> This force, which has grown steadily since its rebirth, is advertised by the Soviets as an elite shock unit. In prose worthy of John Wayne's press agent, the Moscow Domestic Service has reported:

Attack is the marines' element. . . . It is a great honor for our youth to be a marine . . . he can swim, dive, run, cut barbed wire, blow up boats, fight a tank singlehanded, manage in any situation, and independently make decisions. If he is surrounded by the enemy, the marine fights to his last breath--this is the unwritten law of the marines.<sup>21</sup>

By 1970 this force had grown to seven brigades, organized into 500 man battalions which cruised with the Soviet Fleet in amphibious landing ships.<sup>22</sup> In 1971 the marines were believed to number about 15,000 men.<sup>23</sup>

The growing confidence of the Soviet Navy was apparent in the statements of Admiral Gorshkov and other senior officers in 1964. Said the Commander-in-Chief, "For the Soviet Navy, 1964 is the year of the routine long cruise." On Navy Day, Vice Admiral Grishanov was moved to remark

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<sup>19</sup>"Short-Sighted Strategy," Izvestia, May 19, 1963, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>Ignatius, op. cit.

<sup>21</sup>Charles L. Parnell, "'SEVER' and the Baltic Bottleneck," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, 95 (August 1969), 31.

<sup>22</sup>Speech by General L. F. Chapman, USMC, "After Troop Withdrawal: Dependence on Sea Power," Vital Speeches, XXXVI (August 1, 1970), 630.

<sup>23</sup>Charles G. Pritchard, "The Soviet Marines," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, 98 No. 3 (March 1972), p. 21. Mr. Pritchard is a U.S. government research analyst.



"Sailors are grateful to their beloved Communist Party for the great attention that has been paid to the Navy. Our Party's Central Committee and N. S. Khrushchev personally are attentively following the development of our Navy."<sup>24</sup>

Gone was the 1960 deference to the Strategic Rocket Troops. Said Grishanov: " . . . the long-range rockets of our submarines can strike with high-power nuclear warheads not only groupings of the enemy's naval forces but even targets deep in the aggressor's home territory." Apparently gone as well was the exclusive role of the submarine as the only acceptable weapon of modern naval warfare, although it was still clearly regarded as dominant:

In addition to submarines, the homeland has given the fleet the latest surface rocket-launching vessels and rocket-firing planes, which become one of the basic forces of the Navy.

At the Marti Shipyard in the Black Sea Port of Nicolaev, Soviet workmen began construction of what was to become the first Soviet venture into shipborne naval aviation: the anti-submarine warfare (ASW) cruiser MOSKVA. It is not at all certain that Soviet strategists had fully embraced this concept as early as 1964. There is evidence to indicate that both MOSKVA and her sister ship LENINGRAD were originally laid down to fill orders placed by Indonesia, but were not delivered because Moscow and Djakarta parted company politically prior to their completion.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Izvestia, July 26, 1964, p. 1. As Chief of the Political Directorate of the Navy, Grishanov could of course be expected to laud the role of the Party in his Navy Day statement, however, since he could have done so without indicating such satisfaction with the Navy's fortunes, the air of pleasure is probably genuine.

<sup>25</sup>Breyer, op. cit., p. 256.



That the Soviets were at least nibbling at the edges of the concept of ship-helicopter partnership, however, is indicated by the commencement of construction on the KRESTA class guided missile cruisers in 1964. These impressive ships, armed with a mix of SHADDOCK anti-ship missiles and GOA anti-aircraft missiles, the latter with a range of nine to twelve miles, incorporate the weapons systems of the earlier KYNDA class missile ships and the gas turbine propulsion of the KASHIN class, and include a helicopter hanger and flight deck adequate to service one or perhaps two helos.

Activity was the hallmark of Soviet naval affairs in 1964 as Soviet ships called at more foreign ports than in the preceding five years combined, visiting Denmark, Norway, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Morocco, and Senegal. The Mediterranean squadron was reestablished on a continuing basis, and NATO observers noted that Soviet naval exercises, of which four were conducted, "revealed more imagination and enthusiasm" than ever before.<sup>26</sup> In the spring of that year, Western observers gained their first glimpse of a KASHIN class destroyer, as it transited the Turkish Straits enroute to the Mediterranean. Pacific Fleet units began to make their first, sporadic appearances in the Philippine Sea.<sup>27</sup>

Krushchev's fall from power, in October of that year, appears to have had no immediate repercussions within the Soviet Navy.

Nineteen sixty-five was a relatively uneventful year for the Soviet Navy. Rear Admiral G. F. Stepanov visited Massawa, Ethiopia, aboard the destroyer NAPORISTYI in February. In the spring a small force conducted exercises off North Cape, Norway's northern shoulder, and in the summer

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<sup>26</sup>NATO Letter, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup>Cox, op. cit., p. 41.





a group of thirty surface combatants plus support ships and an unknown number of submarines conducted a full-ranging operation in the area from the Iceland-Faeroes Gap to North Cape. The Mediterranean squadron increased slightly in size but conducted no major exercises and confined its activities to the eastern half of the sea. Soviet naval units made their first visit to Egypt when they called at Port Said in September. The process of upgrading the Navy continued, as Admiral Kasatonov was promoted to Admiral of the Fleet.

On Navy Day 1965, Admiral Gorshkov indicated that the Soviet naval buildup was tailored to produce a force which could defeat the U.S. Navy, which he described as having a "special role" in the "military preparations of the American imperialists and their protégés." He said in reference to the Soviet Navy, "In the past few decades its development--the profound qualitative changes in its armaments and its equipment with new ships--has been subordinated to this goal."<sup>28</sup>

The pattern established the pattern established the previous year of calling at Egyptian ports was continued and expanded in 1966. In March a Soviet guided missile destroyer, a frigate, two submarines, and a depot ship called at Port Said for a five day visit. In July Egyptian units returned the call, visiting the Black Sea port of Sevastopol. An additional group of Soviet naval ships made port at Alexandria in August.<sup>29</sup> Other non bloc port calls were made at Massawa in January and Toulon, France, in November.

In May a Soviet delegation led by Premier Kosygin and Foreign Minister Gromyko traveled to Cairo for nine days of talks concerning "urgent

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<sup>28</sup>"Loyal Sons of the Homeland," Pravda, July 24, 1965, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup>Cox, op. cit., p. 42.





problems of the international system that are of mutual interest."<sup>30</sup> The only high military official to accompany them was Fleet Admiral Gorshkov, a probable indication not only of the importance of the Navy to Soviet foreign policy in the Middle East, but of Gorshkov's increased personal standing in the hierarchy as well.

The Soviets continued to emphasize the expanded nature of their Navy's operations in 1966 and to phrase this in such a way as to imply that such activities represented evidence of a Western naval decline. In the words of First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Navy Kasatonov:

The USSR Navy flag can be seen in all parts of the world's oceans. The aim of these trips is to support the national interests of the Soviet Union. At present, our ships are undergoing naval training in parts of the world's oceans which earlier used to be considered the traditional preserve of the British and American navies.<sup>31</sup>

The spring basic training exercise, conducted in previous years in the vicinity of North Cape, was in 1966 held in the Iceland-Faeroes Gap. Patrol and surveillance operations were conducted in the area to the north and northeast of the British Isles, in the waters once plied by Rodney and Jellicoe in the heyday of the British Grand Fleet. Similar operations were conducted in the Norwegian Sea. A fleet exercise was held near North Cape. In the Mediterranean, the slow buildup of the Soviet squadron continued, and in the Leningrad shipyard the first of the formidable KRESTA class missile cruisers slid down the ways.

In an operation which was probably timed to coincide with the opening of the Soviet Twenty-Third Party Congress, a group of Soviet submarines reportedly made a voyage around the world without surfacing between late

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<sup>30</sup>"Communique on USSR-UAR Talks," Pravda, May 19, 1966, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>NATO Letter, p. 8.



February and early April.<sup>32</sup> This event, which Admiral Gorshkov proudly noted " . . . bespeaks the enormous potential of our fleet," was first announced by the Minister of Defense in the course of his major speech before the Congress. When the new Central Committee was announced, two Admirals were among the total of seven military men elected to Candidate status, joining the commanders of the five largest military districts in the Soviet Union in receiving this honor.<sup>33</sup>

In June 1967 the Six-Day War suddenly thrust the Soviet and American navies together in a crisis area for the first time. The main Soviet and U.S. groups remained separated, but mounted a tense and increased surveillance of each other. The tension was heightened by the rapid emergence of world speculation that the U.S. might feel impelled to intervene militarily in support of its commitment to Israeli survival, and if so, the likely instrument of this intervention would be aircraft from the two attack carriers then in the Sixth Fleet.

The presence of the Soviet force, though not sufficient in striking power to counterbalance the Sixth Fleet militarily, had political effect. For the first time an American President had to include in his crisis calculations that the Soviet Union had the capability to take local military action against U.S. interests in a crisis area not bordering on the Soviet Union. It is extremely unlikely that President Johnson ever seriously considered taking military action to support Israel in this instance, but had the situation been otherwise the fact that for the first time the Russians could do something more credible than threaten to use

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<sup>32</sup>A. Sorokin, "In A Group, Under Water, Around the World," Pravda, April 11, 1966, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup>Cox, op. cit., p. 38.



ICBMs in response would have greatly increased the risk involved in either a Lebanon-type landing or air strike.

It also increased the danger of an accidental superpower clash. When word was recieved in Washington of the attack upon the American intelligence ship LIBERTY, the first reaction of the Secretary of Defense, sustained for about half an hour until further information had been received, was that the Russians had done it.<sup>34</sup> Fortunately this was not a reaction shared by the commander of the Sixth Fleet, who dispatched aircraft to aid the stricken vessel within minutes but made no move toward the Soviets. The course of the aircraft took them in the direction of the battle area, raising the possibility that the Soviet government might interpret this information as the beginning of U.S. intervention when it was reported by Soviet vessels shadowing the U.S. carrier AMERICA. To forestall this the White House sent a hurried message to the Russians via the hotline. Part of the Soviet reaction to the war was to augment their Mediterranean squadron while loudly proclaiming their support for the Arabs. They were careful, however, not to introduce naval units into the combat zone until the geographic limits of Israel's ambitions were clear. Only when it was obvious that the Israelis were going no farther than Suez did Soviet ships enter Egyptian ports again. Within these cautious limits however, the Soviets were making use of their Navy to demonstrate military support for a political commitment, the first time they had done so. Naval 'protection of state interests' had become a reality.

As expected, the combination of political rhetoric and visible naval power returned handsome dividends in increased Soviet prestige among the

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<sup>34</sup> Jonathan Trumbull Howe, Multicrises (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), p. 103. Howe's source for this assertion is Secretary McNamara's congressional testimony.





Arabs. One of the many concrete military results of the Soviet policy of support for the Arabs was the granting of base privileges at Alexandria and Port Said, Egypt, and Latakia, Syria to the Soviet Navy.<sup>35</sup>

In October a more dramatic watershed occurred, one which was to profoundly upgrade the image of the Soviet Navy's combat potential in the eyes of their Western counterparts: The Israeli destroyer EILAT was sunk by STYX missiles fired from one of the Soviet OSA class patrol boats which had been supplied to the Egyptians.<sup>36</sup> This, the first combat use of anti-ship missiles in the history of naval warfare, involved a short-range, relatively primitive Soviet missile. The existence of more sophisticated, longer-range anti-ship missiles on large number of Soviet submarines and on major surface units took on increased significance.

Although the exact timing was undoubtedly coincidental, within a few days after ELIAT was sunk, Fleet Admiral Gorshkov was elevated by the Presidium to the rank of Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union, a promotion which made him the equal of a Marshal of the Soviet Union and clearly indicated not only his entrance into the top of the military hierarchy, but continuing high level satisfaction with the performance of the Navy.

The use of Soviet naval forces to inhibit the operational freedom of the U.S. Navy was apparent in the Pacific as well as the Mediterranean in

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<sup>35</sup> Admiral E. R. Zumwalt, USN, Statement Before the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, March 11, 1971, (hereafter cited as CNO Posture Statement), pp. 14-15, and Howe op. cit., p. 301.

<sup>36</sup> According to Admiral H. R. Rivero USN, then the NATO Mediterranean area commander, Soviet warships were in the harbor at Port Said from whence the missiles were fired, thus deterring Israeli reprisal. Howe, loc. cit.





1967. During the summer an American task force, including one carrier, conducted anti-submarine warfare training in the Sea of Japan was kept under constant surveillance by Soviet Pacific Fleet units. In addition to observing American operations the Soviet harassed the force by maneuvering their vessels in such a manner as to disrupt the U.S. exercises, even to the point of causing two minor collisions. The message was clear: keep out of the Sea of Japan.

In 1967 the first Soviet naval vessel with a significant capability to conduct amphibious landing operations was seen by the West. This type, known as the ALLIGATOR class, and four time larger than any previous Soviet landing ship, is similar to the American Landing Ship Tank (LST) of World War II fame and is capable of carrying a complete Naval Infantry battalion and its equipment. Eight of this class were to be in service by 1971.

Soviet Fleet exercises during 1967 included a large battle problem conducted in the area between Norway and Iceland, plus ASW exercises off North Cape and in the Iceland-Faeroes Gap. In addition to frequenting Egyptian and Syrian ports between June and October, Soviet groups visited Stockholm and Massawa, this latter visit enhanced by the presence of Fleet Admiral Gorshkov himself.

In February 1968, the American intelligence collection ship USS PUEBLO was seized by the Peoples' Republic of Korea, resulting in another Soviet-American naval presence situation in a crisis area. In this case though, it was reasonably clear from the statements of the American government prior to the arrival of the U.S. force in the Sea of Japan that military action was not contemplated as an American response. Soviet leaders probably evaluated the risk of a military superpower confrontation



as acceptable when balanced against the tremendous opportunity which the situation offered to steal a march on the Chinese Communists in their contest for leadership of the "camp of socialism." Soviet destroyers moved boldly into the near vicinity of the American carrier while other units positioned themselves between the U.S. task force and the North Korean coast.<sup>37</sup>

This concrete step, in comparison with nothing more menacing than rhetoric from the Chinese People's Republic, was a powerful rejoinder to the latter's contention that the "Soviet renegade revisionist clique" no longer had the stomach for revolutionary struggle. The Soviets did, however, stop short of an additional step probably open to them: sending Soviet ships to "visit" Wonsan, where the PUEBLO was held, or other North Korean ports.

In the spring of 1968 the Soviet Navy conducted a small exercise to the southeast of the Faeroe Islands, and harrassed a NATO naval force conducting operations off the Norwegian coast, although in this instance no collisions were reported. From July 11-19 the navies of the Soviet Union, Poland, and the German Democratic Republic exercise SEVER ("North"), which was both the first significant naval exercise of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) and the most complex naval operation undertaken to that time by the Soviet Navy. Whether this was one portion of a general "tune-up" of WTO forces to perfect the techniques of joint operations under Soviet control before the plunge into Czechoslovakia can only be speculated, since it is not known in the West when that decision was made. The exercise began

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<sup>37</sup> Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Soviet Sea Power, (Washington: 1969), p. 65.



with an "Eastern Group" attempting to locate and destroy a "Western Group" of surface ships and submarines moving north between Norway and Iceland. The climax of the exercise occurred when troops of the three nations stormed ashore in an amphibious landing operation on the Polish coast.<sup>38</sup>

The Mediterranean squadron continued the accelerated growth pattern which appeared in 1967, reaching a strength of some 61 vessels, including the ASW cruiser MOSKVA, which was first seen by Western observers at this time.<sup>39</sup> In a major extension of Soviet influence, ships of the Northern, Baltic, and Pacific Fleets began operations in the Indian Ocean. In October a force of destroyers, submarines, and support vessels departed European waters on a journey southward around the tip of Africa to join their countrymen, who had previously steamed southwestward from Vladivostok through the South China Sea (remaining well clear of the Tonkin Gulf where U.S. Navy carriers were conducting air strikes against "fraternal socialist" North Vietnam) to enter the Indian Ocean through the Strait of Malacca. The European group, which included some non-military space event tracking and recovery vessels, called at Casablanca, Dar-es-Salaam, and Aden. From mid-December until the following March about 25 to 30 Soviet naval and merchant vessels remained in the vicinity of the remote Seychelles Islands, a tiny remnant of the British Empire northeast of Madagascar.<sup>40</sup> In a flurry of "showing the flag" Soviet naval units made port visits to Yemen, the People's Republic of Southern Yemen, Pakistan, Ceylon, Iran, Iraq, India,

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<sup>38</sup>For a full discussion of SEVER, see Parnell, op. cit.

<sup>39</sup>CSIS, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 63.





Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia during 1968.

In Cuba, Soviet preparation to provide support for their vessels in the Western hemisphere were completed by the end of 1968. During the course of the year facilities for servicing large numbers of ships were completed in Havana, including a floating dock, repair shops, and a communications station.<sup>41</sup>

The Soviet intent to stake a claim to the Indian Ocean area was even more in evidence in 1969, when naval vessels called at ports in the People's Republic of Southern Yemen, Kenya, Ceylon, Ethiopia, Mauritius, and Tanzania. A flotilla enroute to the area from European waters visited Guinea and Nigeria. In July, ships of the Soviet Navy made their first overt penetration of the Caribbean, after choosing a somewhat less than direct transit route from European waters which took them down the Atlantic coast of the U.S. Besides calling at Cuban ports, vessels of this group, which included the Soviets' most modern missile ships, visited Barbados and French Martinique in the Lesser Antilles, to the north of Venezuela.

The Soviet Navy was active in European waters as well. Two large-scale exchanges of ships took place between the Northern Fleet and the Mediterranean squadron, the first such exchange to be accomplished. Large-scale ASW exercises were held in the Norwegian Sea, and additional exercises were conducted in the North Sea between the British Isles and Denmark as well as far to the north of Iceland near the fringe of the polar icecap. The Mediterranean squadron remained at approximately the 1968 level, some 60 ships strong.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>James D. Theberge, "The Doorstep Challenge," Navy, March, 1971, p. 20.

<sup>42</sup>CSIS, op. cit., p. 57.



During this period of high Soviet naval visibility NATO forces gained their first glimpses of two new Soviet nuclear submarine classes. The most important of these was the "Y" class, which is the Russian equivalent of the American POLARIS submarine. It carries sixteen ballistic missiles equipped with nuclear warheads, underwater-launched and capable of an estimated 1500 mile range. This represented a significant increase in the strategic nuclear role of the Navy, in terms of both range and firepower. In addition, the ability to launch the attack from complete submergence provided an increased immunity from detection prior to missile firing. The remaining debutante was a second-generation, high speed (estimated at 30 nautical miles per hour) nuclear model carrying eight of the familiar SHADDOCK missiles.<sup>43</sup>

During April the North Koreans once again initiated a crisis in the Sea of Japan in which the naval forces of the super powers were to become involved. Aircraft from North Korea attacked and shot down an American Navy electronic surveillance aircraft, which crashed in international waters not far south of the major Soviet Pacific Fleet base at Vladivostok. The American reaction was both more circumspect and more menacing than that of the previous year: Official statements did not rule out military action against North Korea, and the American naval forces dispatched to the scene was the largest to be assembled since World War II. The Soviets too reacted differently, adopting a low profile strategy, remaining well away from the American carriers with combat ships, and "assisting" on an ad hoc basis with the search for survivors. Although this "assistance" was viewed in

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<sup>43</sup>R.V.B. Blackman, ed., Jane's Fighting Ships, 1970-1971, (London, 1970), p. 571. This was designated the "C" class by NATO.



some quarters as a fine example of behavior in the best sea-going tradition of aid to those in distress, it should be noted that the Russians were well aware from American statements of the nature of the aircraft and the fact that it had carried large amounts of highly classified equipment--some of which just might float. Whatever else they may have found, the Soviets did recover some human remains, which they duly turned over to an American ship after a high seas rendezvous.

The relatively cautious Soviet policy in this crisis was probably due to three factors. Of greatest importance was the Soviet desire to avoid straining relations with the U.S. at a time when they were apparently quite anxious to maintain a negotiating atmosphere in view of the pending treaty prohibiting offensive weapons from the seabed, the incompletely ratified nuclear nonproliferation treaty, and conversations on the convening of arms limitation talks. Of secondary importance was probably the desire to demonstrate to Kim Il-Sung, whose foreign policy had become one of extreme virulence toward the U.S. even by Communist standards, that he had not been granted cart blanche to involve the Soviet Union in confrontations with the U.S. Uncertainty as to American and North Korean intentions was certainly a factor in the Soviet's caution as well, as they would have found themselves in a touchy position if an American naval force with Soviet naval ships in attendance suddenly became embroiled in combat with the Koreans.

The global reverberations of Soviet naval power continued and grew louder in 1970. In March, Fleet Admiral Gorshkov accepted the invitation of his Algerian counterpart for an eight day visit. In April, the month of the one hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth, the Admiral's forces outdid themselves, staging a worldwide exercise which the Soviet press





unabashedly compared to the voyage of the Great White Fleet, which had announced America's arrival as a great naval power at the turn of the century. Said Admiral Gorshkov: "It is difficult to find an area on the map of the world where ships of the Soviet Navy cannot sail."<sup>44</sup>

During Exercise OKEAN ("Ocean"), which appears to have lasted from April 16 to April 30, Soviet forces conducted operations across the full spectrum of naval capabilities (excluding of course carrier operations), and seemed to give particular attention to sustaining a high tempo of activity by providing logistic support at sea. In the past the Soviets have refueled and re-supplied largely in sheltered anchorages. Fifteen ships exercised in the Philippine Sea, 32 elsewhere in the Pacific, 45 in the Mediterranean, 18 in the Indian Ocean, and 103 in the Atlantic. Amphibious landings were conducted along the Soviet coast in the Sea of Japan, and from the Barents Sea near Murmansk, this latter operation witnessed by Minister of Defense Grechko and Admiral Gorshkov. Considerable publicity attended the launching of a missile from a nuclear submarine. When the exercise was completed the participants fanned out to call at ports throughout the world.

Commenting on Exercise OKEAN in 1971, Fleet Admiral Gorshkov's American counterpart called it " . . . the widest in scope conducted by any post World War II Navy," and " . . . a positive indication of (a) a growing Soviet sophistication in naval planning and conduct of worldwide operations, (b) existence of a capable command and control organization."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>"Soviets Announce Naval Exercise," New York Times, April 15, 1970, p. 16.

<sup>45</sup>CNO Posture Statement, p. 18:





On April 23 Soviet naval prowess intruded more significantly on the American consciousness when the Department of Defense matter-of-factly announced that a Soviet POLARIS submarine ("Y" class) was at that time on station off the East coast, and that it or others like it had been operating there for several months.

In July the government of Mauritius, a tiny island nation in the Indian Ocean some 700 miles east of Madagascar, announced the signing of an agreement which would permit Soviet fishing vessels to call there, and for Soviet aircraft to fly in supplies and equipment for the craft. The Mauritian Prime Minister, speaking in London, specifically denied that the Soviet Union would be allowed to establish a naval base in Mauritius under this agreement, however, speculation to the contrary was widespread. The Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean continued unabated; from 1968 through 1970 the Soviets maintained an average of 14 naval vessels there, with the total once reaching 30.<sup>46</sup>

Late in 1970 it was reported by the Western press that the Soviets had established a military base on the island of Socotra, which is at the entrance to the Gulf of Aden and could be used to control entrance to and exit from the Red Sea.<sup>47</sup> It would also dominate the southern route to and from the Suez canal when re-opened. Socotra, 70 miles long and 20 miles wide, contains three airstrips, each of which could be expanded to accommodate modern jet aircraft. Although it has no natural harbor, construction of a breakwater could provide a man-made port. The property of the People's

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<sup>46</sup> Facts on File, XXX, No. 1534 (March 19-25, 1970), p. 188; Time, January 4, 1971, p. 41.

<sup>47</sup> See for instance syndicated columnist Kingsbury Smith, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, November 26, 1970, and Alvin J. Cottrell, "Russia Nears Domination of Near East," Navy, November 1970, 12-13.



Republic of Yemen (Southern Yemen), the island is said to have been used by the Soviets for training in amphibious landing techniques, and to contain a Soviet communication station.<sup>48</sup> The Soviets and Yemenis have denied the truth of these reports, which have appeared in both British and American press.

A report issued by the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in April, 1971, stated that the Soviets were digging massive tunnels on Socotra and constructing a Gibraltar-like fortress there.<sup>49</sup>

In late August a Soviet "fishing trawler" was an uninvited guest at the premier submarine-launched test firing of the POSEIDON missile, successor to POLARIS. In a display which typified the blunt manner in which the Soviet Union uses sea power, this vessel engaged American recovery forces in a race for debris from the missile's protective covering. After shouldering its way in front of the intended American recovery ship, forcing the latter to reverse its engines to avoid collision, the "trawler" was finally thwarted by the actions of the destroyer escort USS CALCATERRA, which apparently threatened to run it down in turn. American newspaper readers were treated to a picture of the CALCATERRA and the "trawler" in apparent imminent danger of collision.

On the ninth of September a group of Soviet naval ships entered the Cuban port of Cienfuegos and moored, thus participating a colloquy between the American and Soviet governments which the former remains notably reluctant to discuss. The Russian flotilla included a two modern missile

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<sup>48</sup>Cottrell, "Indian: Ocean of Tomorrow," Navy, March, 1971, p. 15.

<sup>49</sup>"Indian Ocean Penetration by Russ Noted With Alarm," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, April 24, 1971, p. A.



ships, an oil tanker, a submarine tender, and an ALLIGATOR class amphibious landing ship. On the deck of the landing ship were some large barges, which were identified by State Department intelligence officials, viewing aerial photos of Cienfuegos, as being of the distinctive type used to receive radioactive effluents from nuclear submarines.<sup>50</sup> First public notice of this activity was given on September 25th, when the U.S. government announced the Presence of the ships, and Defense Department officials stated that it appeared that the Soviets intended to construct naval facilities in Cienfuegos.

Soon after the initial announcement the Department of State made clear that a statement made by President John Kennedy in 1962 was still representative of current policy, a statement to the effect that so long as no offensive weapons are introduced into Cuba there would be peace in the Caribbean. White House press officials stated that should the Soviets construct a base for servicing "nuclear-armed" Soviet vessels in Cuba it would be regarded as a violation of the understandings reached in 1962 with respect to nuclear missiles in Cuba.

On October 9th the Soviet Union issued a statement rejecting the reports of its activities as base construction and stating that the USSR was honoring the Kennedy agreement. On October 13th the submarine tender, accompanied by a tugboat, left Cienfuegos. This same day TASS, the Soviet news agency, issued the following statement: "The Soviet Union has not built and is not building its own military base in Cuba and is not doing anything which would contradict the understanding between the governments of the USSR and the U.S."

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<sup>50</sup> Benjamin Welles, "Foreign Policy: Nixon Dissatisfied With Size and Cost of Intelligence Setup," New York Times, January 15, 1970.





The submarine tender returned to Cienfuegos on October 31st and remained there until early January, 1971. It appears that during this time period the Soviets proceeded with the construction of naval facilities on an island in Cienfuegos harbor and elsewhere in the vicinity. The special barges remained anchored in the harbor. When the tender departed Cienfuegos in early January it left behind extensive facilities for the repair and servicing of nuclear submarines, largely unmanned, but capable of being made fully operational in a short time. It has been reported that later in January these facilities were in fact used to provide support for a conventionally powered submarine which called repeatedly at Cienfuegos.<sup>51</sup>

Throughout this period there was little official comment on what, if any, conversations were taking place between the respective governments with regard to the situation, although in mid-November the State Department announced that the Soviet Union had given "private assurance" that it would not introduce offensive weapons anywhere in the Western Hemisphere. At a news conference on December 21 the Secretary of State reiterated the U.S. position that the servicing of nuclear-armed Soviet vessels "in or from" Cuban ports would be a violation of the 1962 understandings on Cuba.

At the end of 1971 it appeared that arrangements with Egypt had significantly strengthened the Soviet naval force in the Mediterranean. The Soviet Union reportedly has air bases at Aswan, Inshas, Mansura, Beni Suef, Glyan Klis, and a location west of Cairo.<sup>52</sup> An estimated 150-170 Soviet pilots man the fighters and fighter-bombers which operate from these

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<sup>51</sup>Theberge, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>52</sup>"Russia's 'Game Plan': Has It Really Changed?", U.S. News and World Report, July 26, 1971, p. 18



bases. In addition some ten TU-16 BADGER medium-range bombers with Egyptian markings are reportedly flown by Russian pilots on regular surveillance missions over the U.S. Sixth Fleet.<sup>53</sup> Although it is likely that the primary Soviet motive for deploying these forces was to defend Egypt against the deep Israeli air strikes which threatened to undermine the Nasser regime in 1970, they also represent a partial solution to the critical lack of air cover for the Soviet Mediterranean squadron should there be a confrontation with the U.S. Navy. This increases the credibility of the Soviet force as a political counterweight to the carrier-armed Sixth Fleet.

In addition the Soviet Navy makes use of port facilities at Alexandria and Mersa Matruh. Diplomatic sources in London were cited in the press to the effect that the latter port is entirely under Soviet control, off-limits even to Egyptian officials, and is undergoing extensive construction to provide repair and refueling facilities, to be completed by mid-1972.<sup>54</sup> New York Times columnist C. L. Sulzberger reported after an interview with President Anwar Sadat that the Egyptian leader has promised to continue giving the Soviets the use of naval facilities in his country even after a possible settlement of the conflict with Israel.<sup>55</sup>

Besides the military facilities which the Russians have been building for themselves in Egypt they are attempting to obtain the use of several

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<sup>53</sup>William Beecher, "Russians Sending Egypt More Jet Fighter Planes," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, September 1, 1971, p. A; "New Russian Planes Reported in Egypt," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, November 19, 1971, p. A2; "Soviets Building Base in Egypt," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, January 4, 1972, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup>"Russian Naval Base in Egypt," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, January 31, 1972, p. 1.

<sup>55</sup>C. L. Sulzberger, "Sadat Gives Russia Naval Base Pledge," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, December 13, 1971, p. A2.



bases in other areas from which the United States or its European allies have been required to withdraw: Mers-el-Kebir, a former French naval base in Algeria; Wheelus Field, a former U.S. Air Force base in Libya; and most recently, the facilities of Malta, from which British forces, NATO, and the Sixth Fleet have been required to depart. All this of course represents a quiet reversal of the policy toward overseas bases loudly advanced by the Soviet Union since it renounced its Finnish naval base in 1955, that they were the trappings of imperialism and as such were anathema to "the forces of peace and socialism."





## CHAPTER II

### THE GROWTH OF THE SOVIET MERCHANT MARINE

The Soviet Merchant Marine expanded greatly in size and coverage of the world's trade routes between 1960 and 1970, and its aggregate dead-weight tonnage (dwt) increased by 116 per cent. In 1960 this fleet possessed some 873 ocean-going vessels of above 1000 dwt; the total for all the world's fleets was 17,317 ships. In tonnage, the most commonly used comparative unit among merchant (and naval) fleets, the Soviet Union at that time ranked 13th in the world. According to Western sources, as of December 31, 1969, of 19,750 merchantmen in the world's ocean fleets, 1717 were Soviet, aggregating 12,757,000 dwt of the total 297,523,000 dwt. The Russians then occupied sixth place among merchant fleets.<sup>56</sup> A Soviet source placed their maritime fleet at "about 1500 transport vessels" with an aggregate of "more than 12,000,000 tons" dwt as of February, 1971.<sup>57</sup>

This surge actually began in 1958, as directed by the Seven Year Plan of economic development adopted by the Soviet Union in that year, and the greatest portion of it occurred between 1963 and the end of 1965; altogether, the Soviet merchant tonnage quadrupled between 1958-1968. According to the Soviet source noted above, "no form of transport in our country has developed at a more rapid rate than the maritime fleet." Soviet overseas foreign trade began to grow in the Fifties, at first mainly as a consequence of the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic. By 1955 commerce with China accounted for 20 per cent of all Soviet foreign trade. From the Soviet viewpoint their merchant fleet was inadequate to handle this increased oceanborne trade: in 1950 half of all Soviet seaborne trade was carried in Soviet flag ships; by 1955 this figure had declined to less than one-third

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<sup>56</sup>U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Maritime Administration Report No. MAR 560-20 Merchant Fleets of the World, 1960 and 1969 editions.

<sup>57</sup>V. Shmyganovsky, "Course to 105 Countries," Izvestia, February 27, 1971, p. 6.





of the trade volume. Writing about this period in later years, the then Minister of Merchant Marine, Victor E. Bakayev, summed up Soviet unease about this state of affairs: "Soviet foreign trade became increasingly dependent upon the world capitalist fleet and the uncertainties of the capitalist freight market."<sup>58</sup> Russian suspicion of the West and Leninist assurances of the enmity of all capitalist nations for the Soviet Union combined to make such a situation intolerable to the Soviets, hence the forced-draft expansion of the merchant fleet.

The patterns of Soviet foreign policy in the late Fifties and early Sixties were the prime motivation for the expansion of trade, which in turn, called for a merchant fleet. The decision to reach out to the uncommitted nations--Khrushchev's "zone of peace"--with economic credits, developmental aid, and in some cases military equipment, created an increase in the volume of Soviet overseas trade and the demand for Russian vessels to carry it for reasons of both prestige and secrecy. Overseas commitments to the "camp of socialism" blossomed as well: even as trade with China declined as a result of the growing rift between the Soviet and Chinese leadership, Soviet sailings for Hanoi increased and the economic dependency of Castro's Cuba remained a constant demand on the Soviet ability to transport goods by sea.

In the Soviet political system " . . . all important questions of state administration in all fields of the economic, political, and cultural life of the country" are decided by the Council of Ministers, a body which

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<sup>58</sup> Committee on Commerce, U.S. Senate, The Soviet Drive for Maritime Power, (Washington, 1967), p. 7.



corresponds approximately to a Cabinet in Western political terms.<sup>59</sup> The ministers hold portfolios corresponding to various aspects of the administration of the Soviet Union, such as Aviation Industry, Foreign Trade, and Medium Machine Building. Among these is the Ministry of the Merchant Fleet. In terms of Western corporate organization the Ministry functions as a central holding company with headquarters in Moscow and subsidiaries in each of the sea areas in and around the Soviet Union. There are a total of 15 of these subsidiary State Steamship Lines, which control and manage the assets of the entire maritime establishment within the geographical area assigned to them. The Soviet fishing fleets fall within the purview of the Ministry as well as the passenger and cargo carriers.

The state steamship companies are responsible for a much wider range of activities than are most of their Western counterparts:

In addition to normal carrier functions . . . each of the Soviet lines has complete area responsibility for all commercial maritime functions such as operation of repair yards, port facilities . . . salvage operations, maintenance of intermediate training schools for seagoing and related personnel, and a varying degree of responsibility for the housing and social activities of the workers.<sup>60</sup>

The Soviets place heavy emphasis on their training program for merchant fleet personnel. According to the Deputy Minister of the Merchant Marine:

Command personnel are trained at four higher and 12 specialized secondary educational establishments administered by the Ministry of the Merchant Marine. The rank-and-file personnel are trained at special Merchant Marine schools.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>A. I. Denisov and M. G. Kirichenko, Sovetskoe Gosudarstvennoe Pravo, (Moscow, 1957), p. 194. Quoted in Richard C. Gripp, Patterns of Soviet Politics, (Homewood, Ill., 1967), p. 211.

<sup>60</sup>Frank A. Nemec, "The Soviet Maritime Establishment," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, 742 (December, 1964), p. 32.

<sup>61</sup>V. I. Tikhonov, "Flying the Flag of the Soviet Union," Soviet Military Review, June, 1970, p. 9.



In the past five years these schools have trained "close to 20,000 specialists with a higher or specialized secondary education education" noted the Deputy Minister, and in addition a correspondence school system of education is very active in the fleet, its students being given up to forty days leave a year in order to prepare for and pass examinations.<sup>62</sup>

Workers in the Merchant Marine earned the highest average wage in Soviet industry as of 1965, an amount some 40 per cent higher than the average monthly money wage for the economy as a whole, and over 24 per cent above that of the next most highly paid group, the construction workers.<sup>63</sup>

Three additional organizations figure prominently in the operations of the Soviet merchant fleet: the Ministry of Foreign Trade, Sovfrakht, and Sudoimport. The former body controls all the foreign trade of the Soviet Union, and, to the degree permitted by Soviet trading partners, has the power to specify the terms of transport of all merchandise involved, whether imports or exports. Sovfrakht is the government agency which handles the cargo space arrangements for all Soviet trading agencies, both booking space and chartering vessels in order to accomplish this.

Sudoimport is the Soviet Union's ship import and export trading company. According to a Soviet source its sales of Soviet-built ships have greatly increased in recent years, to the point that it operates in 43 countries around the world.<sup>64</sup> It reported export sales in recent years of

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<sup>62</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>63</sup>"USSR v. Tsifrakh," Moscow, 1966, p. 126. Quoted in Committee on Commerce, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>64</sup>"Offered for Sale by Sudoimport," Sovetskaya Rossia, January 28, 1971, p. 4.







26 "large freighters" to nations such as Great Britain, West Germany, and Sweden, tankers to Algeria and Cuba, floating docks to Bulgaria and Finland, and tugboats to the United Arab Republic and Tunisia. Hydrofoil craft have reportedly been sold to the U.S., France, Yugoslavia, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. "Most of Sudoimport's purchases have been from the socialist countries," the source concluded.

In an article published in 1970, the Deputy Minister of Merchant Marine, V. I. Tikhonov, proudly summarized the scope of operations in 1969.<sup>65</sup> He reported "about 3200" port calls among the socialist countries, emphasizing "continuous" sailing to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and "dozens" of daily sailings to Cuba. He noted the existence of "sea communication lines" with 70 Asian, African, and Latin American nations, and reported that in 1969 1,000 port calls were made between four Arab nations, Syria, the UAR, Libya, and Iráq, an equal number among African states, 342 in India and "several hundred" among the ports of Pakistan, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The specific figures given by Minister Tikhonov can neither be confirmed nor denied from non-Soviet sources, but the wide scope of Soviet activity is confirmed in many Western studies.<sup>66</sup>

In commenting on the completion of the annual economic plan for 1970, the Soviet government noted that foreign trade had increased by 11 per cent to a total of 22 billion rubles, and that maritime transport had "stantially" overfulfilled freight volume norms in both coastal and

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<sup>65</sup>Tikhonov, op. cit.

<sup>66</sup>See for instance Frank K. Linge, "Russia's Merchant Ships Ranging Afar," Wall Street Journal, November 18, 1968, p. 36 and Albert E. May, "Soviet Merchant Fleet: 13 Million Tons of Political Power," Navy, March, 1971, 25-29.



overseas shipping.<sup>67</sup> An increase in labor productivity of 7 per cent was reported, a greater increase than in either rail or river transport. In spite of the emphasis given to overseas routes by most Soviet commentators, it appears that, at least as of 1969, a significant portion of the merchant fleet was involved in Soviet coastal shipping. In this year the fleet carried 70 million tons of goods along such routes and 82 million tons in overseas trade.<sup>68</sup>

A significant portion of the ocean freight market is controlled by liner conferences, shipping companies which have formed cartels to regulate the market by means of their aggregate economic power. The Soviets have shown great interest in joining these archtypically capitalist organizations, which set freight rates and allocate shares of the market within a given geographic region among their members. By early 1971 11 Soviet state lines had become members of such conferences, and all remaining lines were in the process of applying for admission.<sup>69</sup>

It appears that the shipping conferences were in many instances reluctant to admit the Soviet companies, and the latter engaged in rate cutting in order to convince the cartels that they would be better served by allowing the Soviets to join the group, where rates and market shares are determined by vote of the members, then by competing with them for the markets. There have been periodic reports of large-scale rate cutting by the Soviets in the past.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>"The Concluding Year of the Five-Year Plan," Pravda, February 4, 1971, pp. 1-2.

<sup>68</sup>Tikhonov, op. cit., p. 9

<sup>69</sup>May, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>70</sup>Linge, op. cit.



The Soviet merchant fleet, though of recent construction, has to date not reflected some of the major changes in marine technology exhibited by the fleets of other nations. Their ships have tended to be smaller than average size, and this has been especially true of their tanker fleet, which averages 9,000 tons dwt against a world average of more than 100,000 tons.<sup>71</sup> In addition to the lack of large tankers the Soviet fleet does not appear to make use of the new container ship concept, which other maritime fleets have enthusiastically embraced. It appears that this will change in the near future. Minister Tikhonov has stated that the new Five Year Plan calls for the construction of larger tankers, up to 150,000 tons dwt, and container ships.<sup>72</sup> Another Soviet source reported in 1971 that "special attention will be paid to the development of seaports . . . there are plans to finish the first section of a deepwater port in the vicinity of Nakhodka, and to begin construction of a new port on the Black Sea . . ."<sup>73</sup>

In some areas of merchant fleet design and technology the Soviets appear to have moved forward rapidly. According to Tikhonov they are greatly impressed by the potentialities inherent in increased automation. The introduction of automation is reported to have reduced the crews on some ships by "nearly a third." They are also attempting to apply computer technology, both at sea in navigational systems and ashore in coordinating

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<sup>71</sup>May, op. cit., 25.

<sup>72</sup>Tikhonov, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>73</sup>Shmyganovsky, op. cit.



fleet operations.<sup>74</sup> A recent Soviet newspaper article reported that the successful use of 48-passenger hovercraft ferries over the past two years on the Sura River was generating efforts to apply this technology to large ocean vessels.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Tikhonov, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

<sup>75</sup>V. Belikov, "Flying above the Waves," Izvestia, January 28, 1971, p. 28.





### CHAPTER III

#### SEA POWER AS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

Naval forces have historically been used in the following ways as instruments of foreign policy:

1. As a visible expression of interest in an area or political situation. Within this context the interest expressed may be either friendly or coercive in nature, and the employment of naval forces may be used to express varying degrees of national commitment to a policy or course of action with regard to the area or situation.
2. As a means of providing covert or overt surveillance of an area of the sea or littoral.
3. To link together non-contiguous or distant portions of a national territory or sphere of influence, both symbolically and militarily.
4. To serve as a visible manifestation of national wealth, power, and technical sophistication at times and places where this would serve the needs of foreign policy.
5. To protect a national merchant fleet or other national interest in the sea, and to threaten that of other nations.
6. As a defense against the actual or potential threat manifested by the naval power of another nation or nations.
7. As an instrument of exploration and/or conquest.

From the contemporary era come two additional uses of naval power:

8. As one facet of a multi-force limited war capability.
9. To provide a platform for strategic nuclear forces.

The Navy has been used effectively on several occasions to express Soviet interest, and on one occasion to express Soviet political commitment in a crisis situation. Since 1964 the continuous presence of Soviet naval units in the Mediterranean has served notice of Soviet interest in this area. The same may be said of Soviet naval activities in the Baltic, Norwegian, Barents, Kara, Laptev, East Siberian, Chuchki, Bering, and Black Seas, the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk, Cuban waters, and the



the Indian Ocean. The Soviet Navy has been used to express commitment to the Arab cause and specifically to the UAR since the Six Day War in 1967. The expression of this commitment has been visits of Soviet warships to Egyptian and Syrian ports and by naval maneuvers during the 1970 Jordan crisis. When a large U.S. naval force took station in the waters off the coast of North Korea following attacks by that country on American naval and air units in 1968 and 1969, Soviet concern for the security of a "fraternal socialist government," and to some degree for the security of its own borders was unmistakably expressed by the actions of Soviet naval forces.

The Soviet Navy has been used with monotonous regularity to provide overt surveillance of the naval forces of NATO nations. It must be assumed that the large Soviet submarine force conducts covert surveillance of Western oceanic weapon and rocketry test areas, as well as coastal surveillance. Wherever they may be and for whatever purpose, it is certain that Navy ships serve as valuable sensors to enable the Soviet Union to remain abreast of developments in the area.

Admiral Gorshkov's forces have made it abundantly clear that the Black Sea, neutralized by the Lausanne Treaty and the Montreux Convention, and the Baltic, classified as international under the law of the sea, are both in fact, Soviet spheres of influence. The same is true of the Sea of Okhotsk and the north polar seas of the Eastern Hemisphere, though geography provides indication enough in these cases. In a vast nation where east and west are still only imperfectly linked the Soviet Navy provides a valuable military connection between far corners. The same is true with respect to the Castro regime, which; at least according to communist lore, owes its continued existence to the Soviet military shield.



Ships of the Soviet Navy have shown the flag in an arc curling around Africa from Nigeria on the Atlantic clockwise to Tanzania on the Indian Ocean, as well along the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula and on the Indian sub-continent. In general however, the Soviet Navy was not particularly active in this field until 1968. Among the underdeveloped nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America the Soviet naval ensign was seen in the ports of only seven countries from 1960-1967. In 1968 the total jumped to eleven, all in Africa, the Middle East, or Indian area. In 1969 the total remained about the same, including repeat visits to Aden, Yemen, Ethiopia, Ceylon, and Kenya; also in 1969 Soviet fleets units began to operate openly in the Caribbean, a pattern continued in 1970-71. The Russians have shown a particular interest in Ethiopia, with at least one naval visit to Massawa every year since 1965. In 1967 Admiral Gorshkov paid a visit to Massawa; only India and Algeria have also received such a manifestation of Soviet naval interest, and that not until 1970.<sup>76</sup>

In the years since World War II the Soviet Union has developed a great interest in the sea, and a considerable reliance upon it. The catch of the vast Soviet fishing fleet provides 25 per cent of the protein in the Soviet diet, an important supplement to an agricultural sector which is still relatively weak.<sup>77</sup> The trade carried on throughout the world by the Soviet merchant marine is not only highly desirable in terms of the Soviet economy, but as well for the support it provides to the foreign aid program and as an essential instrument of Soviet support of "fraternal socialist nations" such as Cuba and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

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<sup>76</sup>Breyer, op. cit., pp. 165-168.

<sup>77</sup>Admiral T. H. Moorer, USN, "The Soviet Navy, Our Ability to Meet the Challenge," Vital Speeches XXXV (1969), p. 744.





The Soviet oceano-hydrographic fleet, the largest and most well-equipped in the world, is exploring the geography and resource content of the world's oceans.

For all of these reasons the Soviets clearly have the traditional need for naval power to protect important national interests at sea. The reverse of this coin is also of great interest to them: NATO powers are heavily reliant on the use of the sea, and a Soviet capability to threaten this use weakens the integrity of the alliance and also forces NATO members to devote resources to preparations to defend vital ocean commerce in wartime, constituting another drain on their peacetime economies.

Of course the most obvious requirement for Soviet naval power is that dictated by the force structure of the world's other superpower. The heavy reliance of the American strategic nuclear forces upon the sea, primarily in terms of the POLARIS system, but also in reference to the limited war role of attack carriers, requires a reply in kind and Soviet military literature clearly indicates that the primary mission of the Soviet Navy in wartime is the age-old requirement to destroy the striking power of the enemy fleet.<sup>78</sup> This same conclusion is borne out by the Soviet force structure, which features the largest force of attack (anti-ship) submarines in the world and large numbers of surface units armed with anti-ship missiles.

Nautical exploration and conquest have vanished from the foreign policy tool chest, except perhaps in two senses: the discovery and assimilation of such riches as the ocean and seabed may hold, and the concept of military intervention. The former activity is conducted largely by Soviet scientific organizations rather than by the Navy. The Soviet Navy's capability for military intervention, though small in comparison to that of the U.S. Navy,

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<sup>78</sup> See Sokolovsky, op. cit., Chapter IV, and Robert W. Herrick, op. cit., Chapter IX.



is certainly sufficient to support such an undertaking under certain conditions. It is subject to severe limitations if opposition by even a small modern military force is postulated,<sup>79</sup> but one must note that in reviewing the record of interventions undertaken since World War II, there are few cases of intervening forces being required to fight their way ashore and, indeed, they have seldom had to engage in combat. In most cases the only requirement has been to land the troops rapidly and then support them logistically. The Soviet Navy, with an assist if need be from the merchant marine, is capable of doing this. With the amphibious lift capacity which it possessed in 1971 the Soviet Navy could put at least 2,000 troops ashore simultaneously in a conventional "across the beach" operation. With the augmentation of ships pressed into service from the Soviet merchant marine to transport Red Army units to the scene this capability could rapidly be increased. In addition, the ASW cruisers MOSKVA and LENINGRAD, although apparently not primarily intended for such use, could serve to land a small force by means of helicopters. The Soviets frequently conduct amphibious landing exercises and appear to give considerable attention to their ability to carry out such operations.<sup>80</sup>

The Soviets are using their Navy as an arm of the strategic missile forces. The appearance in 1969 of the "Y" class ballistic missile submarine, similar to the American POLARIS class, indicates that the Russians share the view of the NATO powers that many advantages accrue from basing strategic missile forces at sea.

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<sup>79</sup>These will be discussed in Chapter IV.

<sup>80</sup>Breyer, op. cit., p. 196, and Parnell, op. cit., pp. 28, 31.



The Soviet Navy would be a very effective limited war force under certain circumstances. It would be able to conduct an effective interdiction campaign using the techniques of submarine and mine warfare. In a situation where air power could be excluded or eliminated, a Soviet force organized around KYNDA and KRESTA class vessels might well be able to defeat a NATO surface group of comparable size due to the superior range of its anti-ship missiles. It must also be borne in mind that the Soviet Union maintains the largest gun-cruiser force in the world today in addition to its more modern missile ships. This force of sixteen cruisers, all but three of them of postwar construction, are capable of speeds in excess of 30 knots and mount guns which outrange those found on any ship currently on active service with the U.S. Navy.

Maritime nations support merchant fleets for essentially three reasons:

1. To add to the total of their GNP by reducing or eliminating the outflow of exchange to procure foreign shipping services, and by increasing the inflow of foreign currency, gold, or credits as a consequence of providing shipping services to other nations.
2. To serve as an arm of the national defense by making available a pool of shipping to be used in time of war and to reduce or eliminate dependence on other nations to carry goods in peacetime the non-availability of which would place the nation at a serious disadvantage (e.g., so-called "strategic goods").
3. To add to their international prestige and influence by projecting an image of national vitality and modernity to other nations, and indicating an interest in the course of events along the trade routes.

All of these considerations are factors in Soviet merchant policy.

The following statement of the objectives of Soviet maritime policy, made by the Minister of Merchant Marine in 1965, clearly illustrates his nation's conception of its merchant fleet as an instrument of foreign policy:





1. The active utilization of the merchant fleet in the economic competition between the socialist and the capitalist systems.
2. The satisfaction in full of the requirements of the economy and the foreign commerce of the country for domestic and imported cargos.
3. The achievement of an increase in the share of the Soviet merchant fleet in international shipping.
4. The extension of concrete assistance to the developing countries in setting up their independent national economies and foreign trade.
5. The containment of the expansion of the aggressive imperialist states in the sphere of international navigation.<sup>81</sup>

This statement requires additional interpretation in the light of the unique nature of Soviet semantics. The term "economic competition" carries a wider meaning in the Soviet lexicon than the Western, including as it does all methods of advancing national influence short of open warfare. The Soviet concept of independence is also sui generis and lends a deeper meaning to the objective voiced in paragraph four. In Soviet terms an "independent national economy" is one in which the West plays no role, and the Soviet Union, as the only developed nation which offers trade and assistance completely without political or economic condition, plays a dominant role.

Although concern has been expressed in Western shipping circles that that the Soviets intend to use their interlocking foreign trade and merchant shipping organizations in conjunction with the economic resources of the Soviet government to drive other merchant fleets out of business, it appears unlikely that this is an operative Soviet goal at the present time. The Soviet goal at the present time. The Soviet decision

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<sup>81</sup>Victor Bakayev, Ekspluatatsia Morskogo Flota, (Moscow, 1965), p. 11. Quoted in Committee on Commerce, op. cit., p. 28.





to join shipping conferences is indicative not of an intent to drive the Western companies out of business but to share in the benefits of the cartel system. The relative size and relative growth rate of the Soviet merchant fleet in comparison to those of other maritime nations also militates against such a grand design. The Soviet fleet has made a spectacular surge in comparison to its pre-1958 size, but in terms of total capacity it is simply not large enough to dominate ocean trade, nor will it be in 1980 with a projected tonnage of 27 million dwt.<sup>82</sup>

It can, however, dominate the ocean carriage trade with certain areas, and this is very definitely a Soviet goal. Building on their carefully constructed anti-colonial image, the Russians seek to dominate the trade of the developing nations as a major part of their campaign to demonstrate the ubiquity of Soviet power. When these nations become disenchanted with the economics of c.i.f. imports and f.o.b. exports the Soviets, by virtue of the "special relationship" previously developed, hope to supply the ships, train the sailors, and develop the port facilities for Third World flag merchant fleets.

The Soviets also clearly intend to carry as much of their total sea-borne trade as possible in their own ships, to avoid the loss of foreign exchange through payment of freight charges to foreign shipping companies. When their trade partner has a large flag fleet of its own it is unlikely that they will succeed in carrying more than about half the trade in Soviet ships, as the pattern of recent Anglo-Soviet trade indicates, but they seek to reduce the foreign share to the absolute minimum.<sup>83</sup> In 1965 Soviet

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<sup>82</sup>This figure is the announced Soviet goal for 1980, according to CSIS op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>83</sup>Phillip Hansen, "The Soviet Merchant Marine," Survival XII, pp. 169-171.



sources reported that 70 per cent of total seaborne Soviet trade was carried in Soviet ships.<sup>84</sup>

According to a Soviet source ships of their merchant marine called over 1,000 times at ports in 23 African nations during 1969. New maritime trade routes were established calling at Dakar, Takoradi, Bathurst, Accra, Conakry, Dar-es-Salasm, Zanzibar, Mombasa, Berbera, and Mogadishu.<sup>85</sup> In addition to the boost to Soviet prestige provided by the high visibility of this modern, well-kept fleet of cargo and passenger vessels, the extension of regular Soviet service to these ports brings with it Soviet trade delegations, shipping company offices, and consulates, further increasing the Russian presence.

The Soviets have been active in assisting African and Arab nations in developing port facilities capable of handling modern, deep-draft vessels, which not only offers them increased opportunities to gain influence in these nations, but allows the Russians to avail themselves of the efficiencies of larger tankers, bulk cargo carriers and containerships without losing access to trade routes because port facilities are not sufficiently modern to discharge such ships. After developing the Yemeni port of Hodeida the Soviets installed their own personnel " . . . to help their Yemeni colleagues operate the port."<sup>86</sup> Aden, in the People's Republic of Yemen, operates under a Russian harbormaster.<sup>87</sup> The deepwater port of Berbera,

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<sup>84</sup> Committee on Commerce, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>85</sup> Tikhanov, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>86</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>87</sup> C. L. Sulzberger, "The Russians Are Coming to the Indian Ocean," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, May 3, 1971.



Somalia, was built with Soviet economic credits, and on the west coast of Africa the Russians assisted with the improvement of the ports of Conakry and Benty in the Republic of Guinea. They have been active in port development in India as well, whose Navy, with many Soviet-built warships, is dependent to a considerable degree upon Soviet material support. The Soviet Union has constructed facilities for the Indian Navy at Vishakhapatnam on the east coast and assisting with development of a naval base at Vizag, in the Andaman Islands.<sup>88</sup> In addition the government of Bengla Desh has announced that war damage at the port of Chittagong will be repaired by the Russians.

The Soviet fishing fleet, largest in the world, has been active in the Indian Ocean, and fisheries agreements have been completed between the Soviet Union and several nations around the littoral. These agreements, such as that noted previously with Mauritius, provide the Soviets with another vehicle for establishing a precedent of Soviet presence and involvement in the area. Once the passage of time has made this presence unremarkable attempts will be made to transform such agreements into arrangements for naval vessels. Such agreements have already led to the establishment of a network of offshore mooring buoys for submarine support.<sup>89</sup>

Soviet sea power should be viewed not only within the historical context of the phenomenon itself, but within the context of Soviet foreign policy methods and objectives as well. It is not within the scope of this study to trace the history of Soviet foreign policy, but its general features since 1945 must be noted to provide a perspective within which to

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<sup>88</sup> P. Crome, "Russian Navy Infiltrates Indian Ocean," German Tribune, October 29, 1970, p. 2.

<sup>89</sup> Sulzberger, op. cit.





to view the growth of Soviet sea power.

It should be noted that the present era of "peaceful co-existence" is neither unique nor necessarily a lasting feature of Soviet foreign policy. Historically, Soviet foreign policy has alternated between periods of militant confrontation with capitalism, emphasizing revolutionary violence and eschewing political coalition with non-communist groups, and periods of less violent tactics, making use of "contradictions" between capitalist nations and collaboration with political forces which are not communist but seek change which the Soviets view as potentially advantageous to themselves.

The basis for the Soviet choice of tactics has been their calculation of "relation of forces" between capitalism and communism. In the Marxist-Leninist view of historical development the tide of communism's advance toward ultimate victory ebbs and flows, and foreign policy tactics have been adjusted in order to wring maximum advance of the cause from favorable circumstances, and to obtain a "breathing spell," in which to build strength and await the next incoming tide, when circumstances appear unfavorable.

Since the end of World War II the top Soviet leadership had changed twice, excluding Malenkov's brief period of at least titular ascendancy. As they do in other nations, these changes in leadership have brought changes in the style and emphasis of Soviet foreign policy in each case. There has been in addition one major tactical shift, from a period of Cold War militance to one of "peaceful co-existence."

Soviet foreign policy in the first five years following the war sought to make use of the disruption of the European political and economic system to extend Soviet influence as far to the west as possible; to "sovietize" the political and economic systems of those nations occupied by the Red Army



and to probe troubled areas elsewhere for possible gains. The Soviets expected the U.S. to withdraw its troops from Europe soon after the war, as Roosevelt had indicated at Yalta. When this did not occur, the weakening of U.S. power and influence in Europe became a major object of Soviet foreign policy. Functioning as the right hand to conventional Soviet diplomacy, in 1947 communist movements throughout the world terminated their wartime policy of united front against fascism and began a program of disruption, subversion, and revolution. In Korea, an area which probably appeared to the Soviets to be outside the area of vital American concern in Asia, an attempt was made to enlarge the communist sphere by limited war, waged through North Korean and later Chinese Communist forces.

In assessing the results of these tactics in 1951, prior to the Nineteenth Party Congress, Stalin and the Politburo probably felt that on the balance some modifications were in order. Achievements in the past five years included the successful consolidation of Soviet power in Eastern Europe, the addition of the world's most populous nation to the "camp of socialism," and the triumph of Soviet science in ending the American atomic monopoly. Against these solid successes, however, were arrayed some seriously unfavorable developments: the crystallization of American resolve to resist Soviet expansion, as evidenced by the Truman Doctrine, the formation of NATO, the Marshall Plan, and rearmament; the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany and growing evidence that at least the United States was looking to German re-armament; the hardening of Western resolve to remain in Berlin; the political isolation of the world communist movement as a result of its opposition to bourgeois political movements at a time when nationalism was becoming the major force in the colonial and former colonial areas; and the beginnings of economic recovery in Western Europe.



The first signs of the shift to the tactic of "peaceful coexistence" are discernable in the policies of the last two years of Stalin's life; a growing Soviet feeling that the immediate postwar opportunities for revolutionary progress had passed, and a defensive strategic outlook tempered with optimism that the growing strength of the Soviet economy and the progress of Soviet science would soon bring about a more favorable relation of forces.

The Soviet view of the United Nations was initially that it would be the vehicle by which the Great Powers would run the postwar world. The Security Council and General Assembly would merely ratify the decisions arrived at by the Big Four Council of Foreign ministers. When this did not turn out to be the case, the United Nations was declared to be another anti-Soviet coalition. The Soviet Union regarded the UN specialized agencies with suspicion and distrust and boycotted them almost entirely. Far from regarding the UN as a useful forum for spreading Soviet influence, the Soviets did their best to keep issues in which they had an interest out of the General Assembly, and in fact tried to limit United Nations membership to those nations which had actively participated in World War II against the Axis powers.

Although there were some changes in tone during Malenkov's not quite two years as head of government, notably the decision to cease obstructing a negotiated Korean settlement, diplomatic efforts in support of a negotiated settlement in Indochina and the beginnings of foreign aid to non-communist nations, the new emphasis in Soviet foreign policy did not gather force until 1955. In that year Nikita Khrushchev and the policy which he was to symbolize burst fully upon the world. In a flurry of East-West





dialogue the Austrian State Treaty was at last signed, marking the first withdrawal of the Red Army from its wartime high tide mark; the first East-West summit meeting since the onset of the Cold War took place pleasantly but inconsequentially at Geneva, and the Soviet Union formally (but ficticiously) recognized the sovereignty of East Germany and established diplomatic relations with the Bonn government, thereby hinting strongly at acceptance of the division of Germany as a more or less permanent feature. These relatively conciliatory moves were balanced by the formation of the Warsaw Treaty Organization in Eastern Europe, and in the developing nations, the first agreement to supply arms from the "camp of socialism" and a triumphal State tour of India, Burma, and Afghanistan featuring the vilification of "western imperialism" and a cast of thousands.

This first year of the Khrushchev era thus displayed many of the major themes of the period: a style of diplomacy which was more genial and personal than that which had preceded it, yet somehow never quite delivered the substance of the accommodations that it seemed to promise; the acceptance of a relatively stable East-West division of Europe; and vigorous efforts to replace Western influence with Soviet influence in the developing nations.

The revamping of the practices of Soviet foreign policy was soon followed by suitable adjustments in its theory. Although over-shadowed at the time by the drama of Stalin's denunciation, a new Soviet view of "peaceful coexistence"--not as a temporary expedient for defensive purposes but as an offensive tactic of indefinite duration--emerged from the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956. Stripped of Marxist-Leninist rhetoric the substance of the new "peaceful coexistence" and its role in





Soviet foreign policy has been admirably summarized by Marshall Shulman:

. . . the mode by which peaceful coexistence is intended to achieve the ultimate purposes of the Revolution is through the conjuncture of a number of factors: An acceptance of Soviet military ascendancy, a demonstrated superiority of the Soviet economic system as a mode of organizing human resources, the detachment of the underdeveloped nations from the Western bloc, the inadequacies of the capitalist economic and social systems. The end result would be the voluntary peaceable acceptance of a new political unity in the world under Soviet leadership.<sup>90</sup>

The official attitude toward war and its role in the triumph of socialism also underwent major surgery. In recognition of a destructive power unforeseen by Lenin, Khrushchev revised the latter's theses to postulate that war with the capitalist powers was no longer fatalistically inevitable, and that, indeed, all-out war must be avoided at practically all cost. In a further modification it was revealed that the transition from capitalism to socialism might take place without violent revolution under some circumstances. In later years, in the face of Chinese attacks on Soviet revolutionary spirit, the Soviets were forced to find an ideological formula which would allow them to avoid the danger of nuclear war, yet allow them to match Chinese rhetorical militance with regard to support for revolutions. The result was the emergence in 1961 of the classification of wars into three groups: world wars, local wars, and national liberation wars. The latter, waged by exploited peoples against the exploiting capitalist nations were "just wars," and as such were to be given "all-round support" by the Soviet Union. The exact substance of "all-round support" was left purposely vague, but in practice it stopped short of direct military action by the Soviet Union.

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<sup>90</sup> Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised, (Cambridge: 1963), p. 271.



Finding the Arabs quite willing to ignore the fact that the Soviet Union had been one of the original champions of Israel's existence, the Russians made use of anti-colonial and anti-semitic sentiment to insinuate themselves into Middle Eastern politics. Having firmly established their position as patrons of Arab nationalism in the aftermath of the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of 1956, the Soviets began to invest heavily in economic and military aid to the Arab states, primarily Egypt.

The "new look" in Soviet foreign policy which featured the retrieval of non-alignment from its Stalinist obloquy and the ideological rehabilitation of nationalist leaders such as Gandhi and Nehru, found a warm welcome in India, which along with Egypt received the majority of Soviet economic and military aid, and at least initially in sub-Saharan Africa, although by the end of 1961 the intricacies of African politics and the heavy-handedness of some Soviet diplomats had dealt a considerable setback to the Soviet program.

The introduction of Soviet nuclear missiles into Cuba in 1962 brought the world as close as it has ever come to nuclear war. Soviet motivation and the degree to which the present leadership was in agreement with Khrushchev's decision remains conjectural, but the crisis should be long remembered as evidence that Soviet foreign policy cannot safely be cast into a comfortable mold based upon an assessment of Leninism as disinclined to great risks and the domination of Eastern Europe as a defensive measure. Both the nature of its government and the dialectical tradition of communist political thought render Soviet foreign policy amenable to extreme fluctuations.



The growth of the Soviet-Arab and Soviet-Cuban relationships during the Khrushchev years was an extremely significant event in the history of Soviet foreign policy, harking back to the days when the Russian Empire pursued interests in the Western Hemisphere, Mediterranean and Indian sub-continent. This was a milestone in the reemergence of Russia as a world power and created requirements for the resources of sea power to support foreign policy which has not existed in Russia since the founding of the Soviet Union.

During Khrushchev's stewardship the Soviet attitude toward the United Nations underwent a great change. The Soviet Union came to realize that even if it could not control UN activities as well as it would like to, it could, by participating in the broad range of UN affairs, block or at least lessen the effect of programs that it viewed as anti-Soviet, make valuable contacts with nations of the Third World, avail itself of numerous opportunities to press the Soviet viewpoint on a broad spectrum of issues. Realizing that the new nations were much more likely to be anti-Western or neutral than anti-Soviet, the Soviet Union became more willing to see UN membership grow, and as a consequence began to devote more attention to cultivating votes in the General Assembly.

Khrushchev's policies toward Western Europe seem with one exception to have been aimed at formalizing the status quo which emerged there during the decade after Germany's surrender. He sought a German peace treaty which would formalize acceptance of Europe's postwar boundaries and Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. He also sought an international agreement which would bar West German acquisition of nuclear weapons. Attempts from 1958-1961 to use access to Berlin as a lever to bring about treaty





negotiations on Soviet terms did not bear fruit; neither did the 1958 Rapacki Plan proposal for a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe. The exception to this policy of stabilization was American involvement in European affairs, which Khrushchev, as did Stalin before him, sought to reduce.

If Soviet leaders thought that the greatest obstacle to their control of Eastern Europe would come from the West they were mistaken. The East Berlin riots of 1953, the Poznan riots of 1956 and the Hungarian Revolution of that same year made it clear that disaffection with the camp of socialism was not an isolated phenomenon caused by the intransigence of Tito. It became apparent during Khrushchev's time if not before then that the maintenance of the desired political atmosphere in Eastern Europe was going to require continuing investments of both the attention of Soviet policymakers and the resources of the Red Army.

Although it did not seem so to western observers at the time it appears that Sino-Soviet relations got steadily worse after Stalin's death. One of the first signs that the Chinese intended to discard the role of grateful Soviet pupil came in 1954 when Mao Tse-tung declined to allow the Russians to maintain their base at Dairen. Although the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) went along with the new line on Stalin in 1956 they let the Russians know that such decisions affecting the world movement should not be taken without prior consultation. In 1958, Peking succeeded in maneuvering Moscow into a public pledge that any attack upon the Chinese People's Republic would be considered as attack upon the Soviet Union, and this on behalf of an issue of little importance to Russia, possession of the islands of Quemoy and Matsu. By 1959 the Russians were sufficiently displeased with



their Chinese neighbors to withdraw their technical assistance from the nuclear development program and renege on a pledge to provide a "sample" atomic weapon for study.

By the end of 1960 Chinese intent to challenge the Soviet Union for leadership of the world communist movement was unmistakable to Moscow, and the Russians retaliated by ending their program of technical assistance in Chinese industrial development and seeking to isolate the CCP within the international movement. Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated rapidly and publicly after this as Peking attacked the "peaceful coexistence" line and the Nuclear Test Ban treaty as sellouts, tried to exclude the Russians from attendance at a planned "Second Bandung" set for 1965 on the ground that the USSR was not an Asian power, and competed vigorously with the Soviet trade and aid program in a dozen Third World nations. Just two months before the Central Committee of the CPSU removed Khrushchev from office the Chinese took not only a more insulting but a more threatening tack: Mao publicly accused the Russians of "social imperialism" in Eastern Europe and then restated the Chinese claim to sovietized Outer Mongolia and indicated that Chinese territorial losses to Imperial Russia were not considered to be final.

In October, 1964, Khrushchev was forced from power by a coalition of his erstwhile lieutenants, led by Aleksi Kosygin and Leonid Brezhnev, ushering in the present phase of Soviet foreign policy. His successors, while not as flamboyant, have been more successful than Khrushchev in most areas of Soviet foreign policy, the notable exception being the dispute with China. Sino-Soviet relations have gotten steadily worse, compounded of a blend of ideological differences and the clash of two formidable nationalisms. Troubled by the continued stirrings of ideas of individual



freedoms and popularly responsive government which had followed in the wake of the Secret Speech, the new regime, after a period of hesitation, moved both within the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to bring the deviants to heel. Their policies evoked echoes of an earlier era, leading on observer to characterize them as "the return of Stalin's ghost."<sup>91</sup>

The primary activity of Soviet foreign policy under Khrushchev's successors has been the expansion of Soviet influence in the world, lured by the scent of withdrawal by the North Atlantic powers and driven by fear of their former protégé, the Peoples Republic of China. Having failed to prevent Chinese acquisition of nuclear weapons the present Russian leadership has greatly increased its own nuclear arsenal and at the end of 1971 was in a position to either seek to stabilize the strategic nuclear balance on a basis of rough parity with the United States, or attempt to achieve a politically effective degree of nuclear superiority. A basic reversal of postwar Soviet policy toward the Federal Republic of Germany has taken place, as the Russians have largely ceased their efforts to isolate Bonn and seek instead a negotiated acceptance of postwar borders and Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. The matter of German nuclear armament remains open but the Russians seem to have effectively removed it from consideration at the moment by allowing German Ostpolitik to progress, keeping alive German hopes for eventual negotiated reunification as long as they don't do anything threatening. With regard to China the Soviets have clearly given up any hope of a reconciliation as long as Mao retains major influence, and have, while awaiting internal developments in China, attempted to attain a favorable international position with détente in Europe and

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<sup>91</sup>Anatole Shub, An Empire Loses Hope (New York, 1970).





the construction of ententes if not actual alliances in the Mideast, Indian Ocean basin and perhaps Japan. As a necessary condition of the expansion of Soviet influence the Russian leaders have greatly enhanced the reach of conventional Soviet military power.

Through Khrushchev led the Soviet Union to the realization of global opportunities and commitments he did not strengthen the Soviet Union's military power correspondingly. This has been a major task of the Brezhnev-Kosygin leadership. They have sought to strengthen the Soviet position viv-a-vis the United States on all levels of warfare. Between 1965 and 1969 Soviet land-based ICBM forces increased five-fold while sea-based missiles more than doubled.<sup>92</sup> The growth of naval forces and marines, as well as large transport aircraft such as the AN-22 increased Soviet reach on the conventional warfare level.

The need for enemies against which to rally both the world movement and the Russian people themselves has grown steadily since the new leaders assumed power in Russia. It is likely that this is more than merely a cynical tactic, but as well a manifestation of a genuine fear on the part of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) that extensive contact with the West and a relaxation of the struggle against capitalism will inevitably erode Party control of their own country and Eastern Europe. The discovery of the activities of Colonel Oleg Penkovskiy of the KGB and his subsequent trial and execution in 1965 was a tremendous shock to the Russians, for here was a traitor who had actually done what he was accused of doing, not a political rival being eliminated on trumped-up charges. It set off a

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<sup>92</sup>"U.S. 'Watching' Russ Missiles," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, February 26, 1971, p. A.



witch hunt both in Russia and in Eastern Europe and provided tremendous reinforcement to CPSU paranoia.<sup>93</sup> During the same period a small but stubborn "democratic movement" developed among Russian scientists, writers, and even some in the military, which advocated the actual practice of civil liberties and rule of law as specified in the Soviet constitution.<sup>94</sup> The "Prague Spring" of 1968 was surely seen by the Russians as another warning what contact with the West and too great an atmosphere of détente in Europe might do to their position in that part of the continent if Soviet troops were not present to support "the progressive forces" and fend off subversion and "German revanchism."

While Khrushchev often sought to obtain dramatic foreign policy gains through the application of sudden initiative--in Berlin, in the United Nations, in Cuba--the style of Soviet foreign policy since he was turned out of office has been that of a powerful but conservative business corporation, seeking to build a solid foundation as the basis for advance. Sea power has very much played a role in this modus operandi. Instead of seeking a permanent nuclear missile presence in the Western Hemisphere by emplacing weapons in Cuba, the present leadership has obtained the same

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<sup>93</sup> Penkovskiy, with impeccable Party credentials and a brilliant career behind him, became an agent for Western intelligence and appears to have furnished extremely damaging information about the Soviet missile program, information which enabled President Kennedy to know that American ICBM strength was in fact far superior to Russia's at the time of the Cuban missile crisis. For an analysis of Penkovskiy's effect upon the Soviets, see Anatole Shub, op. cit., Chapter Eight. See also Oleg Penkovskiy, The Penkovskiy Papers (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1965).

<sup>94</sup> Shub, op. cit., gives a lengthy Western assessment of this movement, and Andrei Amalrik, Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984? (New York, 1970) provides a contemporary Russian view.



result with less risk through the use of sea-based missiles, while at the same time expanding Soviet use of Cuba as a military base through increased deployment of other naval forces as well. Rather than a colorful personal tour of the Indian Ocean area the less dramatic but more influential incursion of naval vessels and fishing trawlers has occurred. In the Mediterranean Soviet influence flows through a conduit of merchantmen from Odessa, Sevastopol, and Rostov to Alexandria, Latakia, and Algiers, while the Navy's permanent presence demonstrates that the U.S. is not the only nation with the means to support its friends and chastise its foes in this most ancient arena of sea power.

The ultimate goal of Soviet foreign policy has been, and remains, the global ascendancy of Marxism-Leninism as a political philosophy. In the Soviet view this equates to the global ascendancy of the Soviet Union, at least until the "withering away" of all states occurs after mankind reaches its highest historical stage, communism. Since it is the worker's fatherland, the interests of all true proletarians must be identical with Soviet interests. Professed communist states like China who differ with the Soviet Union are thus by definition heretics. As Marxist-Leninists, the Soviets believe that they will be bitterly opposed in the pursuit of this goal by those nations where the capitalist class and its political philosophy are dominant. Although it accepts the reality of a world system made up of states, and deals with them individually and collectively in the short run as allies, as neutrals, or as enemies just as other states do, for the Soviet Union the long-term frame of reference remains the class struggle, the conflict between socialism and capitalism. The effect of this is a world view in which all capitalist states are regarded as fundamentally hostile, regardless of the political alignment of the moment. There is





literally nothing, other than embracing Soviet-style socialism as a political philosophy, which the latter can do to cleanse themselves of this hostility in Soviet eyes.

These fundamental aspects of the Marxist-Leninist outlook have their parallels in the pre-communist Russian national ethic, in which may be seen both a sense of mission and a perception of the world beyond as hostile. Russian messianism was apparent in the views of 16th century religious leaders who propounded the doctrine of Muscovy as "the Third Rome." As the only remaining independent Orthodox Christian state (the others having come under the rule of the Ottoman Empire) Muscovy was, in their view, destined to be the successor to Byzantium and become the seat of a third Empire. This sense of messianism and of Russians as a chosen people continued into the 19th century, where it was expressed in several forms: The doctrine of Pan-Slavism, in which view it was the Russian destiny to unite and rule all the Slavic peoples; Russian intervention in European politics as the protector of royal legitimacy; and in Russian literature, most notably in the works of Dostoevski and Pushkin. The Tsars anticipated their Soviet successors in a suspicion of the world beyond their frontiers and the desire to insulate their people against its political ideas-- Russian soldiers returning home from France in 1815 were segregated from the general population in the fear that they had absorbed dangerous political ideas in the course of their sojourn.<sup>95</sup>

The blend of Marxist-Leninist proletarian internationalism and Russian messianism has produced a Soviet "arrogance of power" which far surpasses

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<sup>95</sup> Robert G. Wesson, Soviet Foreign Policy in Perspective, (Homewood, Ill., 1969), p. 16.



that conceived by the originator of the phrase. It is a sense of cosmic righteousness which once moved the Soviet foreign minister to say with regard to his country's desire that Finland cede the Karelian Isthmus and other territory:

. . . we cannot allow the solution of this vital and urgent problem to depend on the ill-will of the present rulers of Finland. This problem will have to be solved by the efforts of the USSR itself in friendly collaboration with the Finnish people.<sup>96</sup>

The "friendly collaboration" ultimately resulted in over 260,000 casualties.

This attitude persists in the present, where it is displayed with striking clarity in the Brezhnev Doctrine. Advanced as an answer to foreign Communist critics of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, it asserts that the Soviet Union, in the name of the class struggle and proletarian internationalism, has both the right and duty to intervene forcibly in the affairs of any member of the "socialist commonwealth" despite such "abstract notions" as national sovereignty and self-determination. The limits of the "socialist commonwealth" have never been defined. Seeking to lay to rest any false impressions which the sudden appearance in Czechoslovakia of more than a quarter million WTO troops may have given to the uninitiated, Pravda, said:

. . . socialist armies can have no other task than the defense and strengthening of socialism . . . . The Soviet Army cannot be used for seizing territory, acquiring colonies, nor for aggression against peoples. The Soviet Army is only a liberating Army.<sup>97</sup>

Though the present Soviet leaders continue to view the world through the lens of Marxism-Leninsim and to clothe their statements in the jargon of proletarian internationalism they are in fact not internationalists of any stripe but Russian nationalists, less the intellectual heirs of Lenin

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<sup>96</sup> V. M. Molotov, radio broadcast to the Soviet people, November 29, 1939, in Jane Degras, ed., Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, III, (London: 1953), p. 405.

<sup>97</sup> October 9, 1968, quoted in Wesson, op. cit., p. 384.



than of Peter the Great, Catherine, and Stalin. Stalin's program of "building socialism in one country" was a drive to give Soviet Russia the economic and military sinews of world power as rapidly as possible. It was interrupted by the devastation of World War II and the position of unprecedented power and influence which devolved upon the United States as a result. It has been carried to fruition by the Brezhnev-Kosygin leadership.

Fueled by a tradition of more than five centuries of territorial expansion, rationalized by a once religious but now secular creed which portrays it as the chosen instrument of mankind's higher destiny, and buttressed by a doctrine of historical inevitability, Russia stands on the brink of the final quarter of the 20th century in the most powerful position it has ever known. Russian history and recent trends alike suggest that outward pressure by the Soviet Union in an attempt to extend Russian hegemony unless blocked by a stronger Power will be a feature of world politics in the 1970s.





## CHAPTER IV

### COMPARISON OF SOVIET AND U.S. NAVAL FORCES

One aspect of the consideration of the impact of the growth of Soviet sea power upon U.S. foreign policy must necessarily be the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two navies. Table I and Figures 1 and 2 present some key features of each Navy.

Several aspects of the quantitative comparison displayed in Table I deserve further mention. It should be noted that the preponderance of the Soviet submarine force is not in ballistic missile submarines, designed to deliver strategic nuclear weapons against land-based targets, but in submarines armed with torpedoes and anti-ship missiles. The Soviets have clearly tailored their submarine force for the interdiction of sea lines of communication.

The Soviet Navy has about a three-to-one advantage in cruiser strength, especially in cruisers armed with naval guns. The U.S. Navy has no "gun cruisers" currently in active service; the Soviets are believed to have sixteen. This provides the Soviet Navy with a better capability to provide naval bombardment of targets ashore, a necessity for conducting amphibious landings against defended coasts.

Large amphibious ships, of the type required to transport troops over long distances and supply them with food and equipment, are conspicuous by their absence in the Soviet Navy. The Soviet merchant fleet, centrally controlled and wholly manned by Soviet or East European nationals, is capable of making up for much of this disparity on short notice.

Soviet naval forces do not include ship-based fixed-wing aircraft, which can provide reconnaissance and air defense for surface ships, and provide the means to project naval power inland in support of ground forces.



COMPARISON OF MAXIMUM ATTACK RANGES OF SOVIET NAVAL FORCES  
AND U.S. CARRIER FORCES

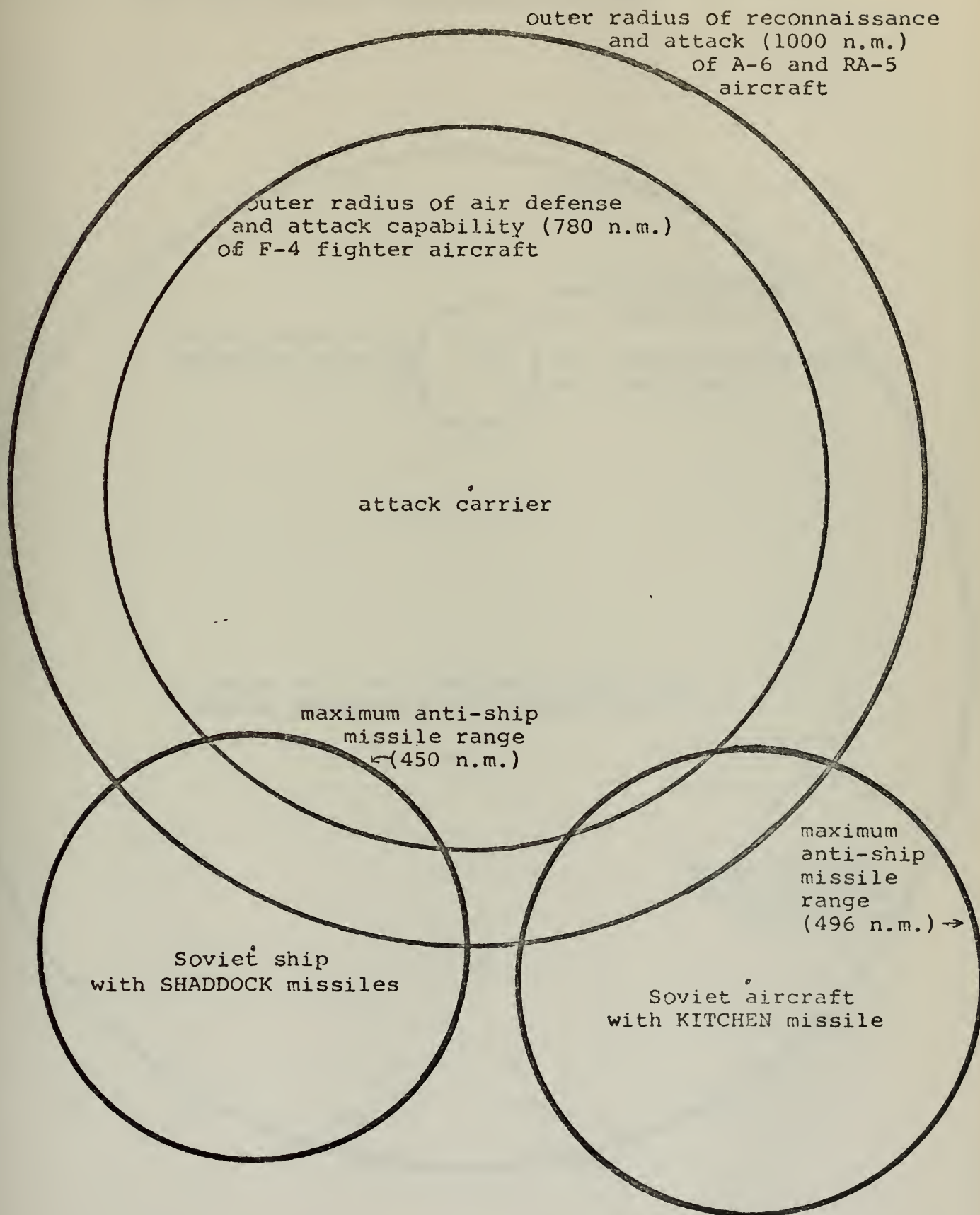


FIGURE 1



COMPARISON OF MAXIMUM ATTACK RANGE OF SOVIET NAVAL FORCES  
AND U.S. NAVAL FORCES WITHOUT CARRIER



FIGURE 2





This, combined with the fact that the presently known anti-aircraft missiles on Soviet ships are for the most part short range (9-12 nautical miles)<sup>98</sup> means that Soviet surface forces are relatively vulnerable to air attack. The shore-based aircraft of the Soviet Naval Air Force are not designed for defense of Soviet ships against air attack, and have neither the performance characteristics nor the types of weapons required for air-to-air combat.

A more graphic representation of the combat potential inherent in the two navies is given by Figures 1 and 2. In naval warfare, as in boxing, the contestant with the greater reach has the advantage. This is of course even more true in modern naval engagements, where one "punch"--if it contains a nuclear war-head--may be decisive.

Figure 1, which depicts the reach of representative Soviet and U.S. Naval forces in a situation in which the American group included an attack aircraft carrier, indicates the potentially decisive advantage which the U.S. Navy force would enjoy. If detected, either of the Soviet forces represented in this case could be destroyed by carrier aircraft before it approached the American force to a range within the reach of its missiles. This is not to imply that such an outcome is assured--Soviet surface ships, aircraft, or, especially submarines, might be able to escape detection and approach within striking range--but subject to the uncertainties inherent in naval warfare the U.S. force would be in a very favorable position. It must further be noted that the circumstances depicted above assumes that a state of hostilities exists prior to the encounter of the forces, and that each would therefore seek to destroy the other as soon as the enemy

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<sup>98</sup>Breyer, op. cit., p. 63.



TABLE I

## US-USSR ACTIVE NAVAL STRENGTH (SELECTED FORCES)---1971

	US NAVY	USSR NAVY
SUBMARINES*		
Ballistic missile armed, nuclear powered	41	33
Ballistic missile armed, conventional	0	10
Antiship missile armed, nuclear powered	0	30
Antiship missile armed, conventional	0	20
Torpedo armed, nuclear powered	47	15
Torpedo armed, conventional	48	240
SURFACE SHIPS		
Aircraft carriers (attack and ASW)	16	0
ASW cruiser (operates about 20 helos)	0	2
Other cruisers	8	28
Frigates and destroyer types	208	206 <sup>a</sup>
Amphibious assault ships (32 helos) <sup>b</sup>	7	0
Amphibious cargo ships <sup>b</sup>	6	0
Amphibious transports <sup>b</sup>	2	0
Tank landing ships <sup>b</sup>	24	8
Amphibious transport, dock <sup>b</sup>	13	0
Landing ship, dock	10	0
Antiship missile fast patrol boats	0	150
NAVAL AIR FORCES		
Attack carrier air wings <sup>c</sup>	13	0
ASW air groups <sup>d</sup>	3	0
Land-based, long-range reconnaissance/attack aircraft <sup>e</sup>	225	200+

## NOTES

\*These figures, determined from Jane's 1970-71 and Breyer, op. cit., indicate a total of 270 conventional (diesel-electric powered) and 78 nuclear powered submarines in the Soviet Navy. Secretary of Defense Laird's testimony before Congress concerning the FY 1972 Defense Budget indicated that the Soviets had 264 conventional and 87 nuclear powered submarines. Other than noting that 17 of the nuclear powered submarines were of the "Y" class, similar to the US POLARIS submarines, Secretary Laird provided no breakdown of the Soviet submarine force by types of submarine.

<sup>a</sup>Laird, op. cit., listed 215 "major surface combatants."



<sup>b</sup>All of these vessels are used to transport troops, equipment and supplies to the area of an amphibious landing and then put them ashore using helicopters, small boats, amphibious tanks and personnel carriers, or, in the case of the Tank Landing Ship, by driving the vessel's bow up onto the beach to allow direct access to the shore.

<sup>c</sup>Such an Air Wing can operate from any one of the 13 Attack Carriers, and consists of 24 fighters for protection of the carrier force and escort of attack and reconnaissance aircraft. 36-48 attack aircraft to strike at seaborne or land-based enemy forces, 3-6 reconnaissance aircraft, 2-4 aerial tankers for midair refueling, and 4 early warning radar picket aircraft.

<sup>d</sup>One ASW Air Group operates from each of the three ASW Carriers, and consists of 21 fixed-wing, piston-engine ASW aircraft, 16 ASW helicopters, and 3 radar picket aircraft.

<sup>e</sup>U.S. aircraft are intended primarily for ASW and all carry special submarine detection equipment for this purpose. They may be armed with torpedoes, rockets, or bombs. Soviet aircraft are largely intended for locating and destroying enemy surface ships, although some are equipped with submarine detection equipment. In addition to bombs, rockets, or torpedoes, the majority of these aircraft may be armed with anti-ship missiles which may be launched 90 miles or more from the target.





was detected and within range of its weapons. If Soviet forces were already within missile range of the American carrier at the outbreak of the conflict the American advantage in reach might be negated.

Figure 2 displays a similar situation, but without the American carrier. Here it will be noted that the reach advantage clearly lies with the Soviets. In this case the American force may be able to defend itself against Soviet anti-ship missiles using either gunfire or anti-aircraft missiles of its own, but it has no way to strike at the source of the Soviet missiles--the ship, submarine, or aircraft which launches them--until the latter is within the much shorter range of U.S. naval weapons. This scenario is, of course, subject to the same element of uncertainty as that of Figure 1, but even granting this the advantage would rest with the Soviets.

On March 11, 1971, Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, USN, Chief of Naval Operations, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee concerning the Fiscal Year 1972 military posture and budget of the U.S. Navy. During the course of this testimony he assessed the relative positions of the two navies. He noted that while the ships and weapons of the U.S. Navy (with the exception of the POLARIS submarine force) were designed to enable the U.S. to control sea lines of communication and project American power in defense of vital overseas interests, those of the Soviet Navy were designed to counter American naval forces and deny the U.S. the use of the seas in support of allies and overseas forces.

The Admiral was particularly concerned with the threat posed by the heavy Soviet investment in long-range anti-ship missile systems, noting that these systems have been "incorporated in 20 major surface combatants,



65 submarines, and 160 patrol craft," as well as in "over 200" long range bombers of the Soviet Naval Air Force and the Long Range Air Force (a group similar in function to the U.S. Strategic Air Command). He evaluated the long range bomber threat to U.S. and allied forces as "significant" throughout much of the North Atlantic, Pacific, and Mediterranean, and went on to state that "In the Norwegian, North, Baltic and Eastern Mediterranean Seas, this threat becomes acute."

Since it must be assumed that the U.S. would not strike at the Soviet Union unless attacked, the combat potential of American forces after a Soviet attack had been launched would be crucial in any conflict between the two nations. In the Mediterranean and elsewhere Soviet vessels armed with anti-ship missiles, exercising their right under international law to free passage on the high seas, are often within striking range of American carriers and other forces. Commenting on present U.S. vulnerability to such missiles Admiral Zumwalt said:

This vulnerability of our surface ships could be reduced in presence of attack carriers by virtue of the fact that the enemy surface-to-surface missile firing ships would not be permitted to survive in strike range of the carrier. But the advantage is currently negated by the offensive strike capability of the Soviet ships trailing ours. In the absence of sea-based air; and even in the presence of sea-based air, if the Soviets should strike first, surface sea control forces and sealift forces are open to attack from three media.

After implying that present defenses against such missiles were not adequate, he went on to say, "In the absence of our attack carriers, our remaining sea control forces are out-gunned in the face of a Soviet surface action force."

It appears that an effective U.S. naval strategy in the face of the threat represented by the Soviet Navy is to be able to prevent, at all



costs, the destruction of the vital attack carrier force by a Soviet surprise attack with surface missile ships and submarines and then to wage effective antisubmarine warfare in the vicinity of the carriers while they destroy Soviet surface forces with air strikes. Although the vulnerability of the modern attack carrier to anti-ship missiles with conventional warheads may well not be so great as many think,<sup>99</sup> the concern voiced by Admiral Zumwalt indicates that the most prudent tactic would be to withhold the attack carriers from the confrontation area, out of the range of missiles from the Soviet force, until after the commencement of hostilities. Such an action would, however, leave any U.S. "presence force" in the area of contention at a grave disadvantage, thereby reducing its ability to act as a stabilizing influence or a deterrent to Soviet military action. What is needed is a way to maintain a credible presence in a trouble zone and probe Soviet intentions without risking the attack carriers. A similar need arises when the opponent is not the Soviet Union itself but a state armed with Soviet missile boats, like Egypt. A second requirement is for numerous and highly effective ASW forces.

Plans which have been announced for the replacement of the many obsolescent ships still in use by the American Navy include the types of weapon systems which could be used to implement such a strategy. One such system is the proposed sea control ship (SCS), which would be similar in size to a light cruiser but very austere equipped and consequently less

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<sup>99</sup>In 1969 an accident occurred aboard the nuclear carrier ENTERPRISE in which nine large bombs, the explosive equivalent of about six conventional warhead anti-ship missiles exploded on her flight deck. She reportedly could have resumed operations "in a matter of hours." See W. V. Whidden, "The Case for the Carrier," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, 97 No. 7 (July 1971), 24-33.





expensive. It would carry a mix of 20-24 helicopters and vertical/short takeoff and landing (VSTOL) jets. The helos would provide an extended reconnaissance and surveillance range and would be equipped to detect and attack submarines. The jets, probably British Harriers initially, would be capable of limited air defense of the SCS and its consorts and attack missions against sea and land targets.

A presence force including one or more of these vessels would have a credible military capability vis á vis Soviet forces as presently constituted, yet would not expose an attack carrier to the hazard of a Soviet first strike. The concept will be tested using an existing amphibious assault ship (helicopter carrier) beginning in January 1972. If the test confirms the utility of the SCS the Navy hopes to begin construction of the first ship in FY 1974 and have it ready for sea in 1978.<sup>100</sup> According to Admiral Zumwalt the SCS cannot replace the attack carrier and should not be considered in this light. This is because its smaller size and the performance limitations of VSTOL aircraft would deny the SCS both the numbers and types of aircraft needed to successfully attack shore targets defended by the sophisticated missiles and aircraft possessed by the Russians and Soviet aid recipients such as Cairo and Hanoi. Its intended use, stated the CNO, is to provide air power for ". . . convoy escort or open ocean support of small task groups" and also for ". . . probing adversary forces for the purpose of determining intentions without increased risk to the CVs and CVAs [attack carriers] in a confrontation situation."<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> R. A. Dobkin, "Low-Priced Minicarrier Facing Test," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, December 27, 1971, p. A8.

<sup>101</sup> Speech at the Test Pilot Symposium, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, quoted in "Sea Control Ship Details Given," Navy Times, June 9, 1971, p. 32.



The building program proposed by the American Navy to replace the more than one-third of its escort vessels which are over twenty years old reflects the twin needs to protect the carriers and to develop ". . . escorts having a hard punch but which do not individually constitute a high percentage of our total capability" for use as presence and "sea control" forces.<sup>102</sup> The DE-1052 class ocean escorts, of which some 46 have been authorized and funded, are built from the keel up for ASW and have demonstrated a tremendously increased capability to detect submarines at long range. The SPRUANCE class destroyer, of which nine of a projected fifty vessels were funded in the FY 1972 budget, incorporates the same greatly improved equipment. The ASW strength of these and other escorts is being increased by providing them with helicopters which will enable them to attack submarines at longer ranges and at less risk to themselves than has been possible before. These LAMPS (Light Airborne Multipurpose System) helos will also provide an improved defense against antiship missiles. A third ship type, still in the design stage, is the patrol frigate. This vessel would be smaller than either the ocean escorts or the SPRUANCE destroyers and is intended to fill the need for relatively large numbers of capable but less technically sophisticated ships to protect the fleet supply train, amphibious assault groups, and other groups not including attack carriers. The Navy would like to have fifty patrol frigates and Congress will be asked to provide initial funding in 1972.<sup>103</sup> In addition a type of hydrofoil missile-armed patrol craft is under development, along with an anti-ship missile, and Admiral Zumwalt proposes that these ". . .

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<sup>102</sup> Admiral Zumwalt, speech to the Cleveland Chapter of the American Ordnance Association, January 27, 1971.

<sup>103</sup> "Navy Seeks Funds for Ship Program," Navy Times, October 13, 1971, p. 36.



will trail enemy missile ships operating within missile range of our major units and will attack them if they attack our ships."<sup>104</sup>

As of 1971 the naval construction program continued to provide for the slow growth of the nuclear powered surface fleet, a development which the Russians have apparently eschewed thus far.<sup>105</sup> The ENTERPRISE is to be joined in September 1973 by the NIMITZ and in June 1975 by the EISENHOWER. The Department of Defense sought funds in the FY 1972 budget, as it had unsuccessfully in the two preceding years, for a fourth nuclear carrier, which if approved in the FY 1973 budget would not be completed until 1980. In addition to the nuclear powered missile cruiser and two frigates presently in service, two more of the latter are building and are scheduled to be placed in service in 1972 and 1973 respectively. The Navy feels that four such vessels will be required as escorts for each of the nuclear carriers.<sup>106</sup> Congress appropriated full funds for two more nuclear frigates in the FY 1971 budget, and provided partial funding for three additional ships of this type. According to the CNO these nuclear powered carriers and their escorts are needed to fill". . . the role of a strategic contingency force with which to react to international emergency situations" in the light of the planned reduction of American forces based overseas

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<sup>104</sup>CNO Posture Statement, p. 41.

<sup>105</sup>Russian experience with the nuclear powered icebreaker LENIN, the announced forerunner of a fleet of similar vessels which have never appeared, may have influenced them against the concept. LENIN was apparently withdrawn from service in 1967, leading some Western observers to suspect propulsion difficulties. See David Fairhall, Russian Sea Power (Boston, 1971), pp. 32-34. In any event it is likely that Soviet nuclear shipbuilding facilities have been filled to capacity by submarine construction requirements.

<sup>106</sup>Tony Neri, "Ships Hike Reflects Concern," Navy Times, June 30, 1971, p. 34.





in the 1970s.<sup>107</sup>

In the field of undersea warfare the American program reflects an intent to continue to maintain the deterrent force of POLARIS submarines at a level of 41 vessels, but to convert 31 of these to the 3000 mile range POSEIDON missile. Authorized and funded additions to the nuclear powered attack submarine force, probably the best weapon platform for ASW, stood at 25 as of March 1971. Of these 12 were of the SSN-688 class, intended to ". . . help offset the speed advantage currently held by the newer classes of Soviet submarines."<sup>108</sup> The first 688s will not reach the fleet before 1975.

It should be noted that most of the vessels discussed above are proposed future acquisitions. The strength of the American Navy continued to decline in 1971. Since 1965 the U.S. Navy was reduced by 25% of its ships and 20% of its combat aircraft. Navy officials have calculated that in order to replace the 1971 level of naval forces on an orderly basis, based on a 25 year ship life cycle, the nation must invest three billion dollars at 1972 prices each year. This level has not been approached in the past eight years. One of the many indirect costs of the Vietnam war has been, in Admiral Zumwalt's words, ". . . a whole generation of shipbuilding."<sup>109</sup>

In sharp contrast to this the Soviet shipbuilding program has been in high gear for the last decade, turning out some 200 naval vessels, 1960-1971.<sup>110</sup> This upward trend in Soviet naval strength shows no sign of

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<sup>107</sup> CNO Posture Statement, p. 48.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>109</sup> Address by Admiral Zumwalt, St. Louis, Missouri, October 14, 1971.

<sup>110</sup> CNO Posture Statement, p. 8.



leveling off. In 1970 western analysts estimated Russian naval construction expenditure at the all-time high of \$3 billion.<sup>111</sup> In 1971 primary emphasis appeared to be placed upon the rapid increase of the Soviet ballistic missile submarine force. Its growth rate is such that Secretary Laird, after having predicted in March 1971 that the Soviets would equal the number of U.S. POLARIS submarines by 1974, was led in October to advance that date to 1973.<sup>112</sup> A new 3,500 mile missile to be launched from these submarines, designated SAWFLY by NATO observers, was reportedly nearly operational by the end of 1971.<sup>113</sup> The 1971-1972 edition of Jane's Fighting Ships reported that Russia was completing nuclear submarines at the rate of one every other month and in May Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, head of the American Navy's nuclear propulsion program, told Congress that he expected the Soviet Navy to have 50% more nuclear submarines than the U.S. Navy by 1975.<sup>114</sup>

Although the submarine seems to have pride of place among Soviet ship types, development of new surface vessels appears to be continuing also. Two of a new type of 7000 ton missile-armed cruiser, dubbed the KRESTA II class to denote their apparent derivation from the KRESTA class of 1964 vintage, were first observed by Westerners in 1971. Also sighted for the first time was one of a new type of heavily armed destroyer, designated the KRIVAC class.

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<sup>111</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>112</sup>William Beecher, "Russian Buildup Worries Laird," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, October 14, 1971, p. A3.

<sup>113</sup>"Russ May Deploy Missile," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, December 3, 1971, p. A2.

<sup>114</sup>Navy Times, October 20, 1971, p. 36.



But the most important recent development concerning Russian naval forces concerns a ship which is only about half completed. On the Black Sea coast, in Nicolayev's Marti Shipyard, a large hull is growing which exhibits the distinctive characteristics of an aircraft carrier. After nearly two years of observation Pentagon intelligence analysts announced in January 1972 that the vessel, which they think will be completed in 1974, appeared to be a carrier in the 20,000-30,000 ton range, slightly smaller than the U.S. Navy's World War II vintage ESSEX class.<sup>115</sup> If the ship is indeed an aircraft carrier it is the first definite manifestation of an extremely significant change in Soviet naval strategy. Said Robert W. Herrick, who in 1964 wrote a book outlining the essentially defensive nature of this strategy, "it could be an event of historic significance that would change the entire nature of Soviet naval strategy."<sup>116</sup>

In making an overall comparison of the American and Soviet navies one must avoid the temptation to let numbers of ships, construction rates, and comparative weapon ranges speak for themselves, for the picture which emerges from a quantitative comparison unleavened by other factors is misleading. One must consider the ability of each navy to meet its nation's military commitments and support other aspects of foreign policy within the context of the international situation as viewed from America and Russia.

From this perspective it becomes apparent that the naval needs of the Soviet Union and the United States differ in significant respects. The former has the longest coastline of any nation, over 66,000 miles of it,

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<sup>115</sup>William Beecher, "Soviets Build A Big Ship--Might Be A Carrier," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, January 18, 1972, p. A1.

<sup>116</sup>Time magazine, January 31, 1972, p. 28.





and this is coupled with great concern for the security of these maritime borders. In addition Russia faces NATO members across the narrow span of the Baltic and Black Sea, while across the Sea of Japan that once and possibly future formidable naval power must be regarded as a potential danger. The large numbers of coastal escort vessels, short-range submarines, and fast patrol boats possessed by the Soviet Navy reflect the fact that coastal defense and border security are major requirements for Russia. The American Navy faces no such requirement, developments in Cuba notwithstanding, and so has allocated almost all its resources to large ocean-going warships.

Geography has another effect upon the Soviet Navy, and this is of course its lack of ports with assured access to the open oceans. Of similar derivation is the fact that the bases of the four Soviet Fleets are widely separated. The former condition means that in planning for naval contingencies the Russians must contend with the "worst case" situation in which one or more of their Fleets might be bottled up in its home waters or that deployed units might be unable to return to their bases for repair and resupply purposes. The separation of their naval forces makes the exchange of ships between them relatively time-consuming and potentially hazardous. Soviet naval planners must either develop four balanced Fleets, which may require some expensive redundancy of ship types, or run the risk that sufficient flexibility may not be available within a given Fleet to enable it to meet the requirements of an unexpected situation.

Geography imposes fewer constraints upon the U.S. Navy, which faces only two "choke points" which might interfere with the passage of naval



forces. The Panama Canal seems likely to remain in U.S. hands for the foreseeable future and short of nuclear war the odds that it would be closed to the American Navy are near zero. There is some limitation imposed here however, because the more modern carriers are too large to transit the canal. The other bottleneck with which the U.S. Navy must contend is the Strait of Gibraltar, which is not at present controlled by potentially hostile Powers though the recent unrest in Morocco could lead in this direction. Because it does not face the threat of naval opposition in its home waters the American Navy can accept a less than optimum mix of ship types there and concentrate its resources on maintaining the capability of the deployed Fleets.

The necessity to provide support for government policy in situations short of war imposes increasingly similar requirements upon the two navies, though there remains a considerable difference in magnitude. The large number of nations with which the United States is militarily allied is too familiar to require recounting here, and this imposes upon the American Navy the necessity of maintaining a clear ability to protect sea lines of communication across huge ocean expanses. Soviet commitments are both fewer and less explicit, but in order to support them the Soviet Navy should manifest a sea control capability between Russia and Cuba, India, North Vietnam, and Egypt as a minimum. Both navies can anticipate assistance from allied navies under some circumstances, but potential American allies are stronger naval powers than those who might aid Russia. In addition to maintaining alliances, both nations seek to influence the policies of governments throughout the world, and here an impressive, wide-ranging Navy is a definite asset. A third area of support for national policy in which both navies are engaged is nuclear deterrence. Here the Soviet Navy faces a



requirement necessitating a larger commitment of resources than the American Navy. The future prospect is for the Soviet Union to require more ballistic missile submarines than the United States, for one can see after scribing a few arcs upon a map that while American submarines in the western Pacific could quite feasibly be targeted against either the People's Republic of China or Asiatic Russia, Russian submersibles on station to deter China could not reach the United States with their missiles. Within the coming decade Soviet military planners will face the need for a sea-based deterrent force large enough to be maintained within range of both the United States and China.

The requirements of naval support for national policy in wartime are best viewed under two headings: general war and limited war.<sup>117</sup> The probability of general war seems low at present and for the foreseeable future, assuming that both nations maintain an assured second strike capability, and the uncertainties involved in constructing a scenario of such a war are so great that little time will be spent here discussing the naval aspects of such an occurrence. It appears that neither Navy devotes a significant amount of resources to preparation for fighting a nuclear war other than in its opening phase, where the problems associated with attack by and defense against ballistic missile submarines receive a great deal of attention. Each navy can support its nation significantly by developing the ability to locate and maintain contact with the other's ballistic missile submarines, and in the Soviet case American carriers as

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<sup>117</sup>"General war" refers to an all-out Soviet-American conflict; "limited war" encompasses conflicts below this level of violence.





well, though the strategic nuclear role of these ships appears now to be of secondary importance.<sup>118</sup>

In viewing the naval requirements of limited war we might usefully consider two general situations: those in which superpowers Russia and America might find themselves in direct opposition and those in which either superpower is in conflict with a lesser Power. In the first category one might find a limited Soviet incursion into Western Europe or perhaps another round in the Arab-Israeli fighting which escalated; in the second a Sino-Soviet or Sino-American war, or superpower intervention in some local conflict not involving the other directly. Those areas in which the first category of conflict has seemed to be worthy of consideration in recent years--Europe, the Middle East, Vietnam, the Indian subcontinent--are all relatively closer to the Soviet Union than the United States and would require less extended sea control efforts of the Soviet Navy than of the U.S. Navy. Similarly, a war with China would impose less strenuous sea control efforts upon the Russian Navy than the American. In all of these circumstances the ability to successfully undertake amphibious landings in the face of strong opposition would be a major naval contribution to success.

Solitary superpower intervention might be considered in a variety of Third World settings and could impose both limited sea control and projection requirements upon either navy.<sup>119</sup> The advent of the fast missile-armed

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<sup>118</sup> Secretary Laird's 1971 Defense Report to Congress made no mention of carriers when discussing strategic nuclear capabilities, but placed them with conventional forces.

<sup>119</sup> "Projection" refers to the process of bringing sea-based power to bear on land, by means of air power or amphibious forces.



patrol boat has meant that significant defensive naval power can be acquired for a price within the reach of an increasing number of small nations.<sup>120</sup> Naval forces of either superpower could well find themselves required to deal with these craft if intervention from the sea was undertaken. And since even a small air force could wreak havoc with intervening troops if unopposed, the interventionist would in many cases need the ability to bring tactical air power to bear from the first moments of the undertaking.

Looking at the two navies in the foregoing context one arrives at the following assessment: the Soviet Navy, for all its spectacular growth, is at present inadequate to fully support Soviet foreign policy. The U.S. Navy, for all its decline in numbers, is still adequate for the needs of national policy. If this were a static situation it would be one from which Americans could take comfort, but it is not. It is instead a steadily shifting balance, moving in 1971 in the direction of Soviet naval sufficiency and American naval inadequacy.

The Soviet Navy is engaged in an all-out catchup effort. Adequate for coastal defense and maritime border security at the beginning of the last decade, it has like the Soviet economy weathered the disruptive effects of Premier Khrushchev's pet schemes and idiosyncracies and is today in the hands of a leadership which either understands the uses of sea power or is content to leave its development to those who do. But at present the effects remain: the bulk of the Soviet Navy is comprised of defensive

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<sup>120</sup> The price may be largely political as in Egypt or purely monetary as it was in Norway, but between military aid programs and technical innovation the number of these craft around the world is increasing.



forces--short-range, diesel powered submarines, small frigates, and fast patrol craft. This is changing, but at the moment the offensive power of the Russian Navy is not adequate to meet the demands which may be placed upon it by Soviet foreign policy.

Measuring the Soviet navy against the tasks incumbent upon it--coastal defense/border security, sea control, nuclear deterrence, limited war, influence projection, and intervention--reveals major limitations:

1) Insufficient numbers of ballistic missile submarines.

2) Inability to control the sea lines of communication to most Soviet commitment areas in the face of the opposition which can be brought to bear by its foremost potential naval adversary.

3) Inability to make opposed amphibious landings in support of a limited war, in areas other than those adjacent to Soviet/East European borders and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

4) Marginal capability for intervention.

Taking each of these in turn, we note first of all that though the question of "how much is enough?" in the area of deterrence is a largely subjective question, it does appear that if the United States has felt for some years that a total of 41 POLARIS submarines was required for deterrence of the Soviet Union alone, it is likely that the roughly 17 vessels of this type operated by the Soviets as of March 1971 would not be considered adequate by the Kremlin to deter both the United States and China. The furious pace of Soviet "Y" class submarine construction is clear evidence that the Russians consider the present force inadequate and also indicates that in this area the Soviet Navy will soon be up to par.





In the area of sea control lack of sea-based air power is the critical Soviet deficiency. Without it the surface warships which are necessary to protect the movement of cargo vessels across the seas cannot long survive in areas where the opponent's aircraft can reach. Though land-based aircraft in the Eastern Mediterranean could perhaps offset this disadvantage with regard to the Soviet position in Egypt, the Soviet Navy could not support the Russian commitments to Cuba, North Vietnam, and India. This same deficiency governs in regard to amphibious operations in a limited war environment, except in Soviet home waters and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Soviet Navy's intervention capability is marginal because of the inability of a Soviet intervention squadron to control the air, and because of the proliferation of the very craft which a Russian client state brought forcefully to the attention of the world, the missile patrol boat. The difficulty of dealing with these elusive targets by means of the Soviet force of seagoing missile ships would probably be great because of the missile guidance problems associated with attacking such a small, fast, waterborne target and because of the probability that these craft could approach undetected. As was demonstrated in the Tonkin Gulf on the few occasions after 1964 when North Vietnamese torpedo boats made forays along the coast, the reconnaissance and attack capability of sea-based aircraft represents an extremely effective counter against the fast patrol boat, but this option is not available to the Soviets at present. However, against nations who had neither aircraft nor missile boats the Soviet Navy could support seaborne intervention.

Turning to the U.S. Navy in the light of the tasks it may be required to perform--sea control, nuclear deterrence, limited war, influence



projection, and intervention--we note:

1) marginal capability to control the sea lines of communication to U.S. allies.

2) marginal capability for opposed amphibious landings in a limited war environment.

The American Navy's sea control forces, according to the CNO's Congressional testimony in March 1971, are at "a lower than prudent level" and might be unable to meet simultaneous wartime requirements for escort of convoy, surveillance of ocean areas, interdiction of enemy sea lines of communication, and offensive operations. Lacking are sufficient shore-based patrol aircraft to cover any but high-priority areas, sufficient ASW carrier forces to protect any but the most urgent military convoys, and sufficient attack submarines to fill all the surveillance stations against Soviet submarines transiting to patrol areas. The Navy's force of missile cruisers, frigates, destroyers, and ocean escorts would be fully occupied in providing protection for the carriers, amphibious forces, and fleet supply train, leaving only some 35 WW II vintage destroyers from the Naval Reserve and 9 long-range Coast Guard cutters available for escort of merchant convoys.<sup>121</sup>

The U.S. amphibious capability is curtailed by the reduced numbers of aircraft carriers, lack of vessels to lift the force to its destination, and the dearth of warships mounting heavy-caliber guns for shore bombardment. Admiral Zumwalt assessed the existing carrier force as adequate to support forces ashore in conflicts within the concept of the Nixon Doctrine where allies bear primary responsibility for ground combat, and which did

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<sup>121</sup>CNO Posture Statement, pp. 25-27. This applies to situations short of full wartime mobilization.



not involve Soviet or Chinese forces. This margin of adequacy is "drastically reduced" if one considers conflicts involving such forces.<sup>122</sup> Sufficient amphibious assault shipping is available in the active fleet to allow one division-sized landing with enough remaining to allow a very small landing elsewhere. This capability, it should be noted, does not take into account the practice which has been followed for some years of keeping amphibious forces ready in the Mediterranean, Caribbean and western Pacific areas. These forces would have to be reduced or eliminated entirely in order to assemble sealift for a division-sized contingency. With the inactivation of the last of the U.S. Navy's heavy cruisers the major-caliber guns considered necessary for an assault against a sophisticated shore defense are lacking.

Twenty-five years after it sailed the oceans unchallenged, flushed with victory in the greatest sea war in history, the U.S. Navy is in need of rebuilding. The Soviet Navy, with its novel weapons and gleaming new warships, is not the cause of American naval disarray, but it is ready and able to reap the benefits of an unchecked aging process if allowed to do so.

Starting from a position of great naval inferiority the Russians have done everything that they can to compensate quickly for their lack of sea-based tactical air power, which is both exceedingly expensive and time-consuming to develop fully. Missiles offer a relatively cheap and rapidly acquired means to extend the striking range of the Soviet Navy into the realm of that enjoyed by those navies possessing the aircraft carrier, but they are subject to serious limitations in comparison to the carrier:

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<sup>122</sup>Ibid., p. 29.





Over-the-horizon reach is possible only when another sensor platform--ship, aircraft, or submarine--has located the target and is able to guide the missile during the intermediate stage of its flight. This would be quite difficult except perhaps as a surprise attack. The missiles themselves can make only one attack, and cannot be recalled or exercise judgment once the attack has been launched. They cannot be kept on airborne alert as a hedge against surprise. In comparison to the number of attacks which a carrier may launch without resupply the staying power of the largest Soviet missile cruiser is insignificant.

The submarine, the other pillar of Soviet naval power, is because of its elusiveness a superb vehicle for the carriage of nuclear deterrent weapons, and a highly effective means of denying the use of the sea's surface to others. In comparison to the surface ship it is much better able to operate beneath a hostile sky. But it cannot secure the use of the oceans for Soviet vessels because it cannot provide protection against attack from the air.

The missile-armed Soviet Navy is a first-strike force with the ability to inflict fatal damage upon the American carrier Navy if it can attain surprise. Barring success in such an endeavor the survival time of the KRESTAs and other Soviet missile ships would be days or at most weeks in a war at sea with the NATO alliance or the United States alone.

The most acute danger to the United States and its allies is not the military capability of the Soviet Navy but that America may misperceive that capability, eagerly aided and abetted by the Russians themselves of course. This danger is that by ballyhooing the submarine and the guided missile the Soviets may induce the United States to abandon the most



valuable weapon of conventional naval warfare, and the one in which America clearly leads all others: the attack carrier, in favor of the newer but less suitable antiship missile technology in which the Soviets are the leaders and the United States presently behind. If the Soviet Union can convince the United States that the maintenance of a modern force of at least a dozen attack carriers is not worthwhile due to the purported vulnerability of surface ships to missile and torpedo attack they will have pulled off an astounding coup. The Russians observed the susceptibility of American society to the bold technological bluff--perhaps because of the conditioning effect of countless advertising campaigns touting the "newer and better"--after Sputnik, although in that instance the apparent failure of Khrushchev to fully anticipate the results of his rocket-rattling backfired. His successors are attempting to apply the tactic again with greater shrewdness.

What must be kept in mind by those charged with formulating American defense policy is that the submarine and the surface missile ship have not given the Soviet Union the navy it needs to support its foreign policy and they will not meet American requirements either.

The United States must not only rebuild its Navy, it must rebuild a balanced force, one which is equipped to deal with the Russian naval threat but not straitjacketed by it. The carrier, as the most versatile and powerful weapon in the arsenal of naval force, must continue to figure prominently in the American Navy. It must be protected against Soviet naval weapons by the construction of sufficient numbers of the escort vessels discussed above. The small, high-speed, missile-armed craft is a useful innovation for certain limited tasks of the U.S. Navy--primarily for keeping



the large Russian missile ships honest during a confrontation at sea--and should be acquired in numbers sufficient to these tasks. The greatest Soviet military threat to the ability of the United States Navy to support the foreign policy of the United States is the advanced nuclear submarine. The threat is one of both numbers and technology and must be met in both respects by means of ASW ships, submarines and aircraft.





## CHAPTER V

### SOVIET SEA POWER AND UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY

From the end of the Second World War until the mid-Sixties the West, and particularly the United States, enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the ability to use the sea to project military and economic power to distant areas in support of foreign policy objectives. This monopoly has been ended by the Soviet Union's turn to the sea. But more than that, Soviet sea power poses a challenge of the utmost gravity to the ability of the United States to attain its basic foreign policy objective: a stable world political system in which the United States is militarily secure and economically viable.

The major foreign policy strategy of the nation in the twentieth century has been to maintain its position as the predominant power in the Western Hemisphere while encouraging and contributing to a stable balance of power in Europe and the Far East. Afro-Asia, divided among colonial powers for most of this century, was dealt with as an extension of the respective metropolitan powers until the early 1950s. This balance of power strategy was distorted almost beyond recognition in the first two decades following World War II, because what emerged was not a system of Powers but a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The situation was further complicated by the rhetoric, largely moralistic and/or anti-Communist, in which United States foreign policy was clothed. To compound the confusion Afro-Asia rapidly emerged as a region which had to be dealt with on the basis of a multitude of weak and often conflicting sovereignties.

Developments which matured during the 1960s have brought the postwar era of international relations, and hopefully the distortion of the American



balance of power strategy, to an end. The recovery of Europe, the economic boom of Japan, the tremendous upsurge of nationalism in Afro-Asia and the instability of the majority of those new nations, the successful assertion of full sovereignty by China, and the tremendous increase in Soviet national power and global influence are the major factors which underlie the international environment of the 1970s. To this must be added the apparent unwillingness of the citizens of the United States, who remain the ultimate arbiters of American foreign policy, to support a strategy which calls for the maintenance of significant numbers of American troops and bases around the the world and their employment as the main military support of regional stability.

There is at present much talk of a "new multipolarity" in international relations, with five major Powers--the United States, Soviet Union, Western Europe, China, and Japan. This in fact anticipates reality, and hopefully at that. As a result of the manner in which World War II was concluded two of these Powers, Japan and Western Europe, are economically powerful but militarily weak, and of course the latter does not in any real sense yet present a unified face to the international scene. China is still at least a generation away from truly crossing the threshold of Great Power status. Though we are at present experiencing the breakup of the Cold War system, we have not yet arrived at a stable new multipolar system.

It is my belief that in seeking a stable peace United States Foreign policy must take into account three overriding factors of the present international environment:

The imperative to avoid nuclear war and thus situations which enhance its probability--nuclear Power military confrontations, the proliferation



of nuclear armed nations, and sudden shifts in the Soviet-American nuclear balance.

The volatility of Afro-Asia, where extreme nationalism, tremendous mass pressures for a better life, and weak governments are a constant source of turmoil. Coupled with this is a growing Soviet military involvement in the affairs of that region.

The inability of the United Nations to act quickly to prevent or snuff out open warfare in Afro-Asia when the interests of the permanent Security Council members are in conflict.

As indicated by the President's annual foreign policy reports<sup>122</sup> the strategy by which the United States seeks to move through the transition period from bipolarity to effective multipolarity appears to be as follows:

In Europe: To maintain the stable regional system which has evolved since World War II by 1) respecting Soviet predominance in Eastern Europe and making no effort to disturb it, and 2) by continuing the Western security system which balances Soviet power in Europe but on the basis of greater European organizational initiative and conventional military force, while maintaining the nuclear guarantee.

In the Western Hemisphere: To maintain the stable regional system through a revitalized network of interamerican political and economic cooperation, extending to Cuba and Chile if they act in accordance with the basic premises of the system, mutual noninterference in domestic affairs and opposition to the intrusion of non-Hemispheric Powers.

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<sup>122</sup> Richard M. Nixon, U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s (Washington, D.C., 1970), and United States Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy Message from the President of the United States Transmitting His Second Annual Review of United States Foreign Policy (Washington, D.C., 1971), hereafter cited as 1971 Foreign Policy Review.





In the Pacific: To foster the growth of regional stability by 1) recognizing China's right to realize her potential as a Great Power if she can do so without making war on her neighbors, withdrawing American military forces from the lands on China's perimeter, and by not obstructing a negotiated return of Taiwan to mainland control; and by 2) encouraging and supporting new regional security and development assistance arrangements among Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Malaysia while honoring previous treaty commitments and providing a nuclear shield under which Japan and Australia will remain willing to forego the development of nuclear weapons. Both American troop deployments and financial contributions to existing security arrangements will be decreased to reflect the growth of regional strength.

Afro-Asia: To minimize both the internal and external effects of regional instability by seeking to keep it free from Great Power rivalry by ending American military involvement there and inducing the Soviet Union to do the same.

Soviet-American Relations: To produce a stable military relationship at the strategic nuclear level, reach an agreed-upon framework for security in Europe, attain a mutually acceptable settlement of the Middle East situation, and by demonstrating that Russian exacerbation of such regional conflicts will not bring gains worthy of the risks and expense involved induce the Soviets to join the United States in refraining from military commitments to nations caught up in Afro-Asian rivalries.

This is a breathtakingly ambitious policy, and one could easily write a book in the attempt to anticipate all the problems to be dealt with and their possible solutions. The intent here is much more limited. It seems indisputable that to successfully follow the strategy outlined above the



United States must possess the ability to influence the course of events in each of the regions noted. It is abundantly clear from historical experience that military power is an indispensable component of national influence, if it is to be exercised in a sustained and purposeful manner over a large area. What is proposed in this analysis is that in the international environment in which United States foreign policy must be conducted, the ability of the Navy to assure American use of the seas is a sine qua non of the effective exercise of military power and that because of this the Soviet Navy represents a critical threat to the achievement of the international system sought by the United States.

Necessary both for the evolution of stable regional systems with lessened American military presence and to the sought-after pattern of Great Power military disengagement in Afro-Asia is a reassessment of the large number of military commitments undertaken by the United States since World War II. It is necessary that this process, which will involve adjustments in the tangible expression of United States support, such as overseas troops and bases, be accomplished on an orderly, controlled basis to avoid creating instability in Europe or increasing it in the Pacific and Afro-Asia. As the burden of providing security shifts regional confidence will be crucial, and the critical component of a mood of confidence will be the manifest ability of the United States to support regional security interests if regional power falters. If the nations which are being told that they must assume the major local responsibility for their own defense feel that a single slip on their part may bring disaster they will not make the transition successfully and the withdrawal of regional American military power will leave in its wake the same unstable situations which have twice in this century combined with expanding authoritarian



states to produce world war. (One might note at this juncture that it is in regard to this need for regional confidence in the prospect of American support if required that the manner of American disengagement from Indochina and the situation left there is of crucial importance.)

It is the ability of the United States to nurture the necessary atmosphere of regional confidence which is most directly affected by Soviet naval power. In an era when the United States no longer enjoys the overwhelming strategic nuclear superiority that it once did American military forces in this category are not sufficient by themselves to elicit confidence in American support if needed. The American guarantee of nuclear defense remains a crucial component but it cannot be the sole or even the primary basis of regional confidence. Because all the nuclear powers (and hopefully the present group will not be enlarged) recognize the overwhelming need to avoid nuclear war, it is in the realm of conventional military force that the military influence upon diplomacy will rest. It is an inescapable result of geography that any American employment of such forces in Europe or the Pacific rests upon the ability of the United States to move large quantities of materiel if not the men themselves, across two of the world's great oceans. The Soviet Navy, with its emphasis on submarines and anti-ship missiles, is aimed squarely at blocking this critical requirement.

The significance of this is not lost upon Western Europeans. Wrote a Frankfurter Rundschau columnist in 1970:

For two years or so Western military men have been seriously alarmed by the rapid development of Soviet naval power. Of late the alarm has reached panic proportions. . . . Soviet naval power is aimed at a





distance gap in NATO strategy. . . . Transatlantic supply lines are... NATO's Achilles heel.<sup>123</sup>

SALT, Ostpolitik, the 1971 Four-Power Berlin treaty, movement toward convening a European security conference and the possibility of mutual NATO-WTO force reductions, the enlargement of the Common Market to ten nations including Great Britain, continuing Sino-Soviet tensions, and the American debate on unilateral troop reductions all promise to create in the near future the greatest change in East-West relations in Europe since the onset of the Cold War. It will take a careful blend of military disengagement and the plausible assurance of support from the United States if the result is to be compatible with the large framework of American foreign policy, a unified Western defense arrangement in which the United States need be no more than an equal partner below the strategic nuclear level to maintain a stable balance of power. Serious lack of confidence that the United States Navy could control the Atlantic sea lines of communication in the face of conventional Soviet naval opposition would make this objective unattainable.

As described in Chapter III an expansionist Soviet foreign policy in the Third World will be a feature of the international environment. If Great Power rivalries are indeed to be muted in Afro-Asia the United States must be able to show the Russians that the game is not worth the candle. Naval power has a critical role to fill in this process, as events in the Middle East and on the Indian subcontinent have demonstrated.

Though Europe is in flux it is stable indeed in comparison to the Middle East, where the United States has an important, even vital interest

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<sup>123</sup>Eric Hauser, "Warsaw Pact Troop Cut Offer Coincides With Alarming Increase in Soviet Naval Power," Translated in The German Tribune, August 6, 1970, p. 2.



in preventing Soviet domination of that area because unfettered access to its oil is crucial to the development of Western Europe and Japan as independent power centers. Here the American contribution to maintaining the precarious balance between the Arab states and Israel consists of preventing a decisive shift against the Israelis, mainly by discouraging direct Soviet military intervention and by selling Israel sufficient advanced weapons to maintain its security in the face of Soviet arms shipments to the radical Arab states. Because both the United States and the Soviet Union are deeply involved a shift in the balance of power which seriously threatened the survival of either Israel or the UAR could bring the superpowers into direct and explosive confrontation.

Such a shift threatened to occur in September 1970, and the interplay of the Soviet and American navies in the Eastern Mediterranean during that crisis is illustrative both of the importance of naval superiority to the attainment of United States foreign policy objectives and the increasingly precarious nature of that superiority in 1970. During the critical phase of an attempt by the Government of Jordan to break the autonomous power of the Palestinian guerrilla movement operating from within its borders, Syrian tanks crossed into Jordan and attacked Jordanian forces. Control of the country was at stake, and with it the Middle East ceasefire, for if Jordan were to come under either Syrian or Palestinian control this sudden shift of the regional balance against Israel would almost certainly have produced a major renewal of the fighting. As President Nixon later put it,

With the Soviet Union so deeply involved in the military operations of the UAR, and with firm U.S. support for Israel, the risk of a great-power confrontation would have been real, indeed.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> 1971 Foreign Policy Review, p. 101.



The United States Government took a firm stand against Syrian intervention, underlining it with the only instrument of American military power immediately available, the Sixth Fleet. Its forces were ordered to move into the Eastern Mediterranean to positions about 200-250 miles from Amman.<sup>125</sup> No assistance was forthcoming from other NATO navies. A large Soviet naval force, including seven vessels armed with anti-ship missiles, moved with the American carrier groups while the Soviet Government vigorously condemned Jordan's position. Three factors differed significantly from those of the military situation in 1967: Soviet strategic nuclear parity, tending toward superiority, a much stronger Soviet naval presence, not a discreet distance as in 1967 but within missile range of the carriers, and the greatly increased tactical air support available to the Soviet Navy from airfields in the UAR. With two attack carriers in the Mediterranean the United States did not have clearcut local military superiority in the face of possible Soviet opposition to military measures in support of the Government of Jordan. A third attack carrier and other reinforcements were hurriedly deployed from the United States and their

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<sup>125</sup> According to the diagram accompanying Vice Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, "The View From the Sixth Fleet Flagship," United States Naval Institute Proceedings, 98 No. 2 (February 1972), pp. 18-29.





arrival gave the Sixth Fleet definite local military superiority,<sup>126</sup> but until then the military equation, and thus the effectiveness of the American Government's attempt to maintain the regional balance by appearing willing and able to employ force if necessary and to do so successfully, was in doubt. President Nixon subsequently characterized this crisis, from which the Hussein government emerged in full control of the country after Syrian forces withdrew and the guerrillas were defeated, as ". . . the gravest threat to world peace since this administration came into office."<sup>127</sup>

Russia is active in seeking to expand its influence into the oceanic heart of Afro-Asia, the Indian Ocean basin. The Soviet Union is heavily involved in the attempted manipulation of internal and external political rivalries in this region: In Somalia, where the Soviet-trained and equipped Army seized power in a coup in 1969, in the Sudan, where a similar coup was attempted against President Numeiry a few months after he declared his intention to destroy the Sudanese Communist Party, in the People's

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<sup>126</sup> To the man on the spot, Vice Admiral Kidd, the arrival of the additional carrier group ". . . was like the sun coming up in the middle of the night." Ibid., p. 25. Unfortunately, this happy ending does not complete the story. Meeting the requirements of this situation placed a tremendous strain upon both ships and men of the depleted Atlantic Fleet. The third carrier, USS JOHN F. KENNEDY, was only halfway through with a training period which began with 70% of her crew newly arrived on board. After she was sent to the Mediterranean only two other attack carriers, both with untrained crews as a result of shipyard overhaul periods, were available in the Atlantic Fleet. The President's subsequent decision to maintain three attack carriers in the Mediterranean, the number apparently required for politically effective naval superiority, tied up nearly half the attack carriers available. In addition, the decision to send additional amphibious forces to the Sixth Fleet left the Caribbean without the Amphibious Ready Group normally kept there for training and contingencies. James N. Hannan, "Its Time To Stop the Downhill Skid," Navy, 13 No. 11 (November 1970), p. 101.

<sup>127</sup> 1971 Foreign Policy Review, p. 101.



Republic of Yemen (Southern Yemen), from whence a guerilla movement is embroiled with neighboring sheikdoms, and on the Indian subcontinent.

A sustained extension of Soviet power to this area would be threatening to both the Chinese Peoples Republic and Japan and could prevent the development of a stable regional situation in the Pacific without a large American military presence. Here again naval power is America's only effective military lever for influencing events, as was illustrated in December 1971 when the Indo-Pakistani rivalry broke into large-scale fighting again.

When it appeared that India, buttressed by the recently completed Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Cooperation with the Soviet Union, might go beyond the limited objective of separating East Pakistan and seek by destroying the bulk of Pakistan's armed forces to reduce that state to helplessness and probable disintegration, a naval squadron including nuclear carrier ENTERPRISE and an amphibious force of 2,000 Marines was ordered into the Bay of Bengal as one facet of an American diplomatic effort to dissuade India from such a step. Once again the superpower military equation was worked out in the capitals concerned and this time the local factors were firmly in American favor: with neither a strong naval presence nor tactical air cover Soviet military strength in the area was insufficient to blunt the implied threat of American intervention. After the introduction of the American naval force a ceasefire was arranged through the United Nations, four previous attempts having failed.

It would be incorrect, especially with so little information available at the present time, to assert that it was solely due to the presence of the American task force that the fighting ceased after Dacca surrendered.



But it is clear that if the United States Government had been unable to dispatch such a force swiftly to the crisis area immediate American diplomatic leverage would have almost disappeared, and with it the ability to do more than issue expressions of regret as the Russians vetoed Security Council ceasefire resolutions and the Government of India coolly ignored world opinion as expressed by the General Assembly.

In addition to reemphasizing the lesson of the 1970 Jordan crisis, this conflict provides an illustration of the value of nuclear propulsion for naval forces which may have to react quickly to developments in distant areas. Had ENTERPRISE required frequent refueling as oil-burning carriers do, the task of maintaining the force in the Indian Ocean for the necessary month would have been much more difficult. As it happened in this particular case there would have been oilers available on relatively short notice because of the standing American naval presence in the nearby Tonkin Gulf and South China Sea. As this decade progresses such fortunate coincidences will become much less likely as the permanent American overseas presence decreases, and it would significantly increase the time necessary to bring such a carrier force to the scene if it was limited by the speed of even the fastest oilers.<sup>128</sup> The fact that the arrival of ENTERPRISE quickly established local American naval superiority in an area where the standing Soviet naval presence had overshadowed a smaller American force for most of the three previous years underlined the fact that the maintenance of a continuous presence is only one aspect of naval power's

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<sup>128</sup> In addition, it takes more than a single oiler to provide enough fuel to keep an oil-burning carrier task force on some oceanic station. A chain of oilers reaching back to the nearest source of fuel is required, and these in their turn must be fueled and protected. When considered against these and other "hidden costs" of an oil-burning carrier fleet the higher initial cost of nuclear propulsion is largely offset by reduced life-cycle operating costs.





capability, one which may be outweighed by the ability of another nation to rapidly move superior forces to a crisis area and keep them there as long as necessary.

Given the international environment of the 1970s as previously described it seems virtually certain that situations such as those recounted here will be repeated. If the present trend in the Soviet-American naval relationship continues, Soviet ability to take local military action to successfully thwart such use of American naval power will become such that the probability that they will do so renders American action prohibitively risky. The ability of the United States to exercise the influence required to successfully conduct its foreign policy strategy outlined previously would be so reduced as to virtually eliminate the chance of success.

But the threat posed by the Soviet Navy to American foreign policy is even graver than that. If Soviet technological and quantitative naval growth rates continue to exceed those of the United States it is probable that before the end of this decade they will seek a naval confrontation outside of the NATO area such that the United States Navy alone can be visibly challenged on the issue "Is the United States able to control the sea routes to areas of her interest and commitment?" Either by forcing the United States to withdraw in the face of Soviet power or by dealing a limited but sharp defeat to American naval forces they would expect to reveal the weakness of American military power below the strategic nuclear level.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Admiral Zumwalt expressed concern over this possibility in a speech in St. Louis, Missouri in October 1971. For a non-military view of such an event, though one which overstates the difficulty of the ASW problem, see Paul Cohen, "The Erosion of Surface Naval Power," Foreign Affairs, 49 No. 2 (January 1971), pp. 330-341. Cohen observes that the effect upon America will could be shattering. I personally feel that it would make the effect of the Vietnam experience look like a ripple in comparison.



This would destroy not only American hopes to establish regional stability in the Pacific and to eventually insulate Afro-Asia from Great Power rivalry, it would destroy the Atlantic Alliance as well. Only by redeploying its land and air forces overseas, and probably not even then, could the United States prevent ". . . the voluntary peaceable acceptance of a new political order in the world under Soviet leadership."<sup>130</sup>

Seen through Russian eyes such a scenario gives and interesting, if necessarily speculative, insight into the discrepancy between present Soviet naval capabilities and the requirements of Soviet foreign policy indicated in Chapter IV. The commitments which now are out of phase with the state of Soviet naval development are not in fact a part of the preferred Soviet foreign policy strategy at present but were improvised attempts to stave off undesirable developments, or were like Cuba an unwelcome legacy from Khrushchev. The Soviet Treaty of Friendship with Egypt came on the heels of President Sadat's purge of pro-Soviet government officials and military officers. The treaty with India was the quid pro quo of an attempt which later failed to induce the Indian Government not to precipitate open war with Pakistan--which the Indians were for their own reasons determined to do.

The Soviets have limited resources to devote to naval construction and in addition their Navy lacks experience and training in the carrier operations required for the projection and sea control roles. It would take not only rubles but a period of 10-12 years to develop a carrier force which could hope to successfully carry out such operations in the face of the conventional naval opposition which could be offered by the United States.

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<sup>130</sup> Marshall Shulman. Cf page 55 above.



But the United States is the only nation with the combination of existing naval forces, experienced seamen and the necessary economic strength to remain ahead of the Russians if they build the Navy for the projection and sea control role that their overall strategy of expanding Soviet influence demands. They are therefore first concentrating their resources on the task of eliminating the U.S. Navy as a force with which they must contend when they turn to the projection and sea control task that they ultimately must surmount if Russia is to expand. At the same time they are making preparations for this role by constructing first vessels which can operate helicopters and VSTOL aircraft, the LENIN and the MOSKVA, and also by building a small attack carrier,<sup>131</sup> all the while decrying the very viability of the idea in the nuclear missile age.

If this strategy works in all respects by the time the morale of the U.S. Navy and the will of the United States to act as a Great Power have been destroyed in the naval confrontation postulated above, the Russian Navy would have a fledgling carrier force which in the drastically changed international climate following the American debacle would be capable of fully supporting Soviet foreign policy because it would not be challenged by the United States. On the other hand if it were to fail the penalties would not be severe--a setback but not a disaster.

Little has been said in this chapter about the impact of the Soviet merchant fleet's far-flung activities upon United States foreign policy because their weight is largely indirect, as an asset to the Russians but not a direct threat to the United States or the other Western seafaring nations and Japan. It fills the Soviet need for seaborne transportation,

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<sup>131</sup>Cf. page 81 above.





provides foreign exchange, on occasion provides logistic support to the Navy, increases the Soviet presence throughout the world and serves as a highly visible manifestation of the promise of the Soviet model of economic development, and provides the necessary controlled carriage of military equipment to clients of the military assistance program. It does not have either the present capacity or the projected growth potential to mount a direct political attack upon the United States and its major allies as is sometimes suggested by driving their merchant fleets out of business and thus denying them the assured carriage of the strategic materials and trade necessary to sustain their economies. It could, however, do severe economic damage to members of an individual liner conference by engaging in sustained price undercutting if the Soviet Government saw some net gain in doing that. To date Soviet pricing behavior has not been significantly different from that of Western shipowners, though they have at times raised the specter of the relatively larger capital resources at their disposal to get concessions from liner conferences.

The United States needs not so much to "keep up with the Russians" or adopt other maritime policies in reaction to existing Russian merchant activities as to recognize its own needs for merchant shipping and take steps to see that they are met. These are, briefly, to have sufficient numbers and types of cargo vessels to serve as a naval auxiliary in the deployment and support of land and air forces which might be required overseas for some limited war contingency and to have a large enough U.S. flag fleet to assure the controlled carriage of strategic materials if necessary. Because of recent trends in merchant vessel construction there is a shortage of some types of ships for the first requirement, but it can be overcome with a relatively modest government expenditure. The Merchant



Marine Act of 1970, which provided strong economic incentives for United States shipping companies to purchase 300 new vessels from American shipyards in the Seventies and operate them under the U.S. flag, should result in a revitalization of the flag fleet to insure that the second requirement can be met.

The events of the next eight to ten years will in all probability determine the pattern of international relations for the remainder of this century. If the essential features of the system sought by the United States are realized, the world will have succeeded in dissipating the explosive combination of regional instability and Great Power rivalry which has kept world war or the threat of world war the almost constant companion of the human race since 1913. By basing its foreign policy not on an idealized conception of human nature but on the establishment of a truly multipolar international system in which competing national interests are accepted as an inescapable feature and can be blunted not only by vetting in an international forum but as well by shifting combinations of national alignment in a world where all major powers have a stake in the status quo and refrain from military involvement in the turbulent affairs of the colonial succession states, the government in the United States might succeed in doing in the 1970s what it failed to accomplish by another method in 1919-1920: make possible a return to some semblance of the relatively peaceful international environment which prevailed in the century between the Congress of Vienna and the guns of August. The alternatives are not pleasant to contemplate in a world where five nations possess nuclear weapons and numerous others are capable of following suit if they come to believe that their security requires it.



The danger that Soviet naval power will be used to prevent the attainment of this goal is acute, not because Russian leaders want war, or because they are evil men, or because they are stupid--no "devil theories" need apply--but because the combined pressures of ideology, history, insecurity, and nationalism will keep them on their present course during the critical period through which the world is now passing,<sup>132</sup> when the transition from a precarious Cold War fostered stability to a less fearful, more resilient multi-polar stability might be achieved.

The action required of the United States to meet this danger is the rehabilitation of its aging Navy and the continued purposeful use of this revitalized force as a diplomatic instrument. The critical and immediate requirement is a high priority naval construction program--time is short and the design and construction of modern naval weapons systems and the development of the new tactics and techniques required to use them effectively is a matter of years rather than months. Such a construction program, which is in excess of that requested by the FY 1972 Defense budget, has been made available to the Congress on an informal, informational basis by the Chief of Naval Operations.<sup>133</sup> It must be approved when submitted formally by the Department if the Russian naval challenge is to be met.

The United States has at present a good framework within which to continue the diplomatic use of naval power. Certainly the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and the Seventh Fleet in the Far East have been utilized

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<sup>132</sup>But for the shock administered by the Vietnam experience the same inertia might apply as well to United States foreign policy.

<sup>133</sup>The program calls for an expenditure of fifty billion dollars over a ten year period to produce an all-nuclear submarine fleet of 105 vessels, the replacement of twelve of the present force of conventionally powered attack carriers with nuclear carriers, deployment of a large number of patrol frigates, and the construction of sea control ships at the rate of two per year. See Orr Kelly, "Navy Seeks \$50 Billion for Ships," The Washington Star, September 2, 1971.





repeatedly in the past as diplomatic instruments. However, the Seventh Fleet has been largely concentrated in the waters off Vietnam and to a lesser extent the Philippines and Japan since 1965. Efforts must be made to expand its cruising to appear more widely throughout not only the Far East but the Indian Ocean as well as soon as the American role in Vietnam permits this. The Sixth Fleet must be strengthened so that it can remain visible and impressive in the Mediterranean in spite of rising Soviet naval and air power in that region.

After a period in which the United States demonstrates to the Russians that it is willing and able to take the measures necessary to prevent them from gaining a politically significant advantage from the risky and costly business of seeking to manipulate regional Afro-Asian disputes, the premises which one hopes will lead to the emergence of a concrete modus vivendi from the SALT may also make possible a mutual reduction of naval forces in the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean, or more likely given Soviet proximity to the latter, a reduction of the Sixth Fleet presence in return for a Soviet Mediterranean operating pattern which unambiguously indicates non-involvement in the turmoil of its southern and eastern shores. There is also a need to increase the combined naval strength of the Atlantic Alliance in Northern European waters in the face of growing alarm among those nations, especially Norway and Germany, at the rise of Soviet naval strength there.<sup>134</sup> The making of the American contribution to this process

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<sup>134</sup> No attempt should be made to end Soviet naval predominance in the Baltic, for this would encroach upon the border security which any Great Power expects to exercise, and would of course be exceptionally destabilizing in the Soviet case. What should be done, however, is to strengthen the naval forces of the Alliance to the point that its ability to control the North Atlantic is unmistakable.



would be eased by a redeployment of warships from the Mediterranean force. Here again the the characteristics of naval power are uniquely appropriate to the needs of American foreign policy, for unlike military force based ashore it can be removed without a trace to facilitate accommodation but be swiftly returned at full strength if accommodation later fails. It is this aspect of naval power which could enable the Sixth Fleet to be reduced under the conditions outlined above without destroying the viability of NATO's Southern Tier--Italy, Greece, and Turkey--if the all-important element of confidence in American strength and will can be maintained.

If future accommodations between the Soviet Union and Chile or a Soviet decision to make active use of its naval facilities in Cuba lead to increased Soviet naval operations in the Caribbean and South American waters the American naval presence will have to be increased there as well. In such an event the capability to introduce and sustain American naval forces into the sea basins bordering on the Soviet Union would be necessary to provide an incentive for mutual forbearance of such tactics.

It has been suggested that the United States undertake initiatives among its maritime allies to inaugurate additional multinational cruising squadrons similar to the existing NATO Standing Naval Force Atlantic and establish procedures to pool information regarding Soviet naval activities with the objective of offsetting their political and psychological impact through the countervailing presence of such squadrons.<sup>135</sup> Such a course of action would be valuable not only because it would spread the burden of countering the Soviet turn to the sea among all who should bear it, but for the favorable impact of multilateralism itself. Such a course would be most useful in providing "show-the-flag" types of naval influence, but the

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<sup>135</sup> James F. McNulty, "Soviet Sea Power: Ripple or Tidal Wave," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, July 1970, p. 23.



experience of the Six-Day War, the 1970 Jordan crisis, and the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War indicates clearly that where "show-of-force" influence is required the United States must be capable of going it alone if necessary.<sup>136</sup>

Even with the employment of such techniques to derive maximum benefit from existing naval forces the rejuvenation and strengthening of American naval power will be a costly process, but it must be undertaken, and at once, if United States foreign policy in the 1970s is to be characterized both by "no more Vietnams" and by success in shaping an international environment in which it and other nations which share a belief in the central importance of individual human liberties can flourish.

Events thus far in the twentieth century indicate that in the long run there can be neither peace nor security for the United States in the absence of a more stable world than past policies have succeeded in calling forth. Present American foreign policy is an attempt to go beyond the measures required for short run national security to reach the larger goal of a stable international system. The success of this policy is inseparable from the ability of the United States to use the oceans of the world to project the military force necessary to support other diplomatic efforts. The maintenance of this ability in the face of Soviet naval power will not of itself assure the success of American foreign policy--but without it success is impossible.

This observation of George Washington, made while the struggle for independence was still in progress, applies with no less force at present:

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<sup>136</sup> The difficulties involved in arranging for such multilateral action to meet a sudden crisis were well illustrated by U.S. efforts to assemble a multinational naval group to put pressure on Egypt to end the blockade of the Gulf of Aquaba, the act which many feel compelled the Israelis to strike. See Howe, op. cit., pp. 82-85.





"It follows as certain as night succeeds day, that without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive. . . ."137

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<sup>137</sup> Letter to the Marquis de la Fayette, November 15, 1781. Robert Debs Heinl, Jr., Dictionary of Naval and Military Quotations (Annapolis, 1966), p. 289.



## APPENDIX

### COMMENT ON SOURCE MATERIALS

Any researcher dealing with a topic involving the composition, disposition and strategic concepts of a military organization must at times discover himself blocked by considerations of security. In the case of this paper this was not a serious obstruction with regard to the military forces of the U.S., but it posed a very significant difficulty with respect to the armed forces of the Soviet Union. Not only are the Russians much more reticent concerning such data, but they virtually never publish such information in consolidated form. The researcher must process many sources in order to gather and consider information scattered throughout the Soviet military and political press.

Although I have engaged a great deal of such sifting in the preparation of this study, as one who lacks a knowledge of the Russian language I must acknowledge definite limitations in this field. Although a study of the journal of translations Current Digest of the Soviet Press produced much which was useful in the preparation of this paper, the articles presented are the selection of an editorial staff seeking to present a survey of a wide field and are thus unavoidably less than a complete picture of the Soviet military press. This caveat must apply as well to the translations compiled by the U.S. Government's Joint Publications Research Service, although these publications do emphasize military, scientific, and technical fields. Other primary sources surveyed were the periodicals Soviet Military Review, International Affairs, and World Marxist Review, all published in English by the Soviet government.



The only lengthy treatment of military policy to be published in the Soviet Union since 1926 is Military Strategy, edited by the late Marshal of the Soviet Union V.D. Sokolovsky. This book was originally published in the Soviet Union in 1962 and was published in revised editions in 1963 and 1968. The 1962 edition has been published in English by RAND and Praeger, and Leon Goure's Notes on the Second Edition of Marshal V.D. Sokolovskii's "Military Strategy" (RM-3792-PR), published by RAND compares the two editions. I did not have access to a translation of the 1968 edition.

Because of these limitations considerable use was made of the detective work of others in preparing this paper. Siegfried Breyer's Guide to the Soviet Navy was invaluable as a source of data on the Soviet naval construction program, Soviet naval bases, the composition of the four main Soviet Fleets. Information concerning Soviet naval visits was obtained from several sources, but here, too, I drew heavily on Breyer.

Table I, comparing Soviet and American naval forces, was derived from a number of sources. Data on the U.S. Navy came from Stefan Terzibaschitsch's compilation in Naval Review 1971, supplemented by the CNO Posture Statement in the case of air groups and by Jane's Fighting Ships, 1970-1971 with regard to the composition of air groups and the figure for land-based aircraft. Soviet forces were derived in the main from Breyer and Jane's, giving precedence to the former where conflict occurred. As noted previously, Secretary Laird's recent Congressional testimony confirmed the order of magnitude of the data thus derived, but indicated that the Soviets had six more conventional and nine more nuclear submarines than either of the other sources listed.





The weapon ranges depicted in figures one and two were derived from Jane's 1970-71 for the U.S. Navy and Breyer for the Soviet Navy. Data concerning Soviet weapons elsewhere in the paper are also from Breyer.

Of the large number of studies of Soviet sea power currently available I found the following works, in addition to that of Breyer, to be most valuable to me in the preparation of this paper. Gunboat Diplomacy by James Cable gives a cogent analysis of the ways in which limited naval force may be used as an arm of diplomacy, based upon a survey of this practice over the past fifty years. In addition the author devoted a chapter to examining "the Soviet naval enigma". Russian Sea Power by David Fairhall is a carefully balanced appraisal of the subject with emphasis upon the nonmilitary aspects of Russia's maritime efforts. Robert W. Herrick's Soviet Naval Strategy is the most comprehensive Western study of that subject, though I believe that events since its publication in 1968 have overtaken the author's theory that it is fundamentally defensive in nature. Thomas W. Wolfe's meticulously documented Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970, though not a study of naval developments, gives a thorough assessment of the overall military policy of the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime and its relationship to foreign policy. Multicrises by Jonathan Trumbull Howe is a study of naval forces and global politics in the nuclear era which focuses on the Quemoy-Matsu crisis of 1958 and the Six-Day War. It is a uniquely informative source regarding the naval aspects of the 1967 Middle East crisis.



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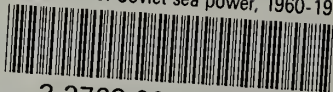
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